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AMTRAK: ASLEEP AT THE SWITCH

Richard Hébert

DEFENSE SPENDING

The Dead Weight of SALT

Richard F. Kaufman

Houses on Wheels

CLOGGING THE OPEN ROAD

Al Martinez

Simon Karlinsky / Gippius and Russian Poetry

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LETTERS

Agnes' aftermath

Scranton, Pa.

DEAR SIRS: "The greatest natural disaster in the history of the United States," as President Nixon described the destruction caused by tropical storm Agnes when it swept through five Eastern states, has been almost forgotten by the major news media. And so in behalf of the victims of the storm and especially of those in Northeastern Pennsylvania, I would like to ask for your help.

Damage to homes, public facilities, business and industry in Pennsylvania alone is now estimated at $3 billion. Frankly, we need help in telling this story to the public and the opinion leaders of the country. The city of Wilkes-Barre and its suburbs were especially hard hit, as were towns up and down the Susquehanna River. . . . A small committee has joined with the major regional media in trying to direct further attention to the unique scale of this disaster and the rebuilding efforts needed there. . . .

Your readers can be of major importance in helping the people of this stricken area.

William W. Scranton
Judge Max Rosenn, Temporary Chairman
Community Recovery Council

affluence of power

Alexandria, Va.

DEAR SIRS: Robert Sherrill's story on the "Energy Crisis" [*The Nation*, June 26] states that it is a recently conceived fiction of special interest groups and that America's energy affluence is assured.

Since Mr. Sherrill targets me as an accessory to the energy crisis, I feel your readers should be made aware that his article has many shortcomings.

Citing an estimate that "55 per cent of our discoverable oil and 66 per cent of our discoverable natural gas are still in the ground," Sherrill makes light of any future fuel shortages in this area. U.S. wells have produced slightly more than 100 billion barrels of oil in the past seventy-two years. Using Sherrill's 55 per cent figure, this would leave about 120 billion barrels in the ground. Conservative projections for the next twenty-eight years place the U.S. consumption at 250 billion barrels! And of course we do not plan to terminate our fuel consumption at the year 2000.

U.S. production of natural gas in this country totals about 370 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) and, using the 66 per cent figure above, this means 720 Tcf of "discoverable" gas. However, twenty-eight-year projections of future demand exceed 1,000 Tcf. . . .

Mr. Sherrill takes me to task for warning against "energy switches" which could disclocate the energy economy. When I caution against allowing utilities to burn more natural gas, Sherrill says—let them burn coal. And by way of expediting this energy switch, he invokes MHD. . . . I am familiar with MHD as obviously Mr. Sherrill is not, since MHD conversion units in Japan and Germany are not used by utilities. MHD is in the small scale or experimental "cocoon" stage.

Yes, I believe that U.S. energy security is in a state of challenge. And I hope that Mr. Sherrill will be encouraged to study the source problem and acknowledge that America does indeed face serious energy shortages in our time.

Ralph Lapp

Washington, D.C.

DEAR SIRS: I do not make light of future fuel shortages but of the ethics of an industry that will overwhelm the public with fears of that shortage in order to reap an economic bonanza . . . that will warn of an immediate energy crisis while it says something quite different in its official conversations. I refer, for example, to the *International*

(Continued on page 116)

EDITORIALS

CAMPAIGN '72

Next, the Issues

Now that some of the noisy media-fostered hubbub over the switch in Vice Presidential nominees has abated, the present position of the Democrats can be assessed. R. Sargent Shriver, by any reckoning, is a stronger nominee than Senator Eagleton, quite apart from the latter's medical history and his failure—initially—to disclose it. Shriver adds strength to the ticket for many reasons, all of which have been widely publicized. In addition, he offers a fine contrast with Spiro Agnew. Eagleton's medical history would have made it difficult for the Democrats to exploit the Agnew issue. Because of the hateful attitudes he has shown toward large sections of the American electorate, Agnew is not the kind of person that many Republicans, independents and Democrats want to see in the White House. Yet if the Nixon-Agnew ticket wins, it will be difficult—quite apart from more immediate hazards—for the Republicans to deny Agnew the Presidential nomination in 1976. He has, in so many words, said that he would be the candidate. The importance of the Agnew issue alone warranted the replacement of Eagleton, and it is fortunate for the Democrats that McGovern has finally chosen a man of Shriver's qualifications, attractive qualities and strong political appeal.

No doubt Senator Eagleton has been disappointed, but he is now a nationally known politician who has enhanced his reputation by the graceful way in which he bowed out. He has also acquired the status of a folk hero in Missouri and doubtless enjoys permanent tenure as U.S. Senator from that state. An attractive politician, his talents can be put to good use in the campaign. The fact that he has stepped aside should now make it possible to discuss the real issues unclouded by such fascinating but extraneous considerations as the nature and efficacy of electric shock therapy.

Not only is the choice on the major issues clear but an encouraging aspect of the campaign is that most voters have been able to identify them without becoming bewitched by such "symbolic" issues as bussing, abortion and prayer in the schools. For example, two broadly based polls conducted by the Republican National Committee, one of Republican leaders, the other of community leaders across the country selected on a nonpartisan basis, have shown, to the acknowledged surprise of those who commissioned them, that 58 per cent of those polled regard bussing as "not very important" or "not a problem at all." A Gallup poll conducted in mid-July indicates that the war in Vietnam and economic problems are the principal concerns of American voters in this election, and disclosed that 53 per cent of those polled believe that the problems they consider most important can be handled better by the Democratic Party.

Particularly significant is the obvious failure of what columnist Joseph Kraft calls "backlash politics." Kraft cites studies conducted by Paul Sheatsley of the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, in 1956, 1963, 1970 and 1972, which show steady im-

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provement in attitudes on racial integration. In 1963 the survey showed that 63 per cent thought white and black students should attend the same schools; by 1972 the figure had risen to 86 per cent. Discount these estimates as you will, the direction of the trend they indicate is clear. That is basically why the Nixon-Agnew emphasis on the so-called "social issues" failed to stampede voters in the 1970 Congressional elections. Such issues are even less likely to sway voters in a Presidential election in which major issues are involved. Alice Rivlin, writing in *The Washington Post*, makes the vital point: "A comparison of the 1972 Democratic platform with its 1968 counterpart is a jolting reminder of how much history we have lived through in four years and how much the concerns of the country—not just the Democrats—have altered in that short time." The remarkable about-faces of Richard Nixon confirm this judgment.

Because so much has happened, issues seem to overshadow personalities in this campaign. But this does not mean that judgments about the character and integrity of the Presidential and Vice Presidential nominees of the two parties are of secondary importance; on the contrary, the significance of the issues underscores those considerations. Character and personality traits were not too important in the Harding-Cox, Coolidge-Davis campaigns; but they are of great importance in 1972 because momentous issues make relative credibility and trustworthiness of the candidates major considerations. If the issues in this campaign are clear, as President Nixon insists, so too is the contrast between the Nixon-Agnew and McGovern-Shriver tickets in terms of character, personality traits and general credibility. So it is now essential to turn to the issues, including the one just mentioned.

Campaign coverage of recent weeks offers a striking illustration of how the media overemphasize matters of special interest to themselves. Contrast, for example, the coverage of how, when and why McGovern made his decision to replace Eagleton with coverage, for the same period, of new developments in the case of the Watergate Five, or, as it might be called, the Case of the Burglars' Committee to Re-Elect the President. Elaborate rundowns on how McGovern made his decision have been presented, including minute coverage of what he did between 2:20 P.M. and 2:30 P.M. of a Tuesday, and so on throughout the week, with close attention to every trivial detail, particularly gossip calculated to create friction between McGovern and his staff or among staff members or between Democrats of various camps.

This obsessive coverage is at striking odds with the virtual blackout on the scandal involving the Committee to Re-Elect the President. G. Gordon Liddy, former White House official, declined to answer questions before a federal grand jury about the Watergate case. He was assigned counsel from the Justice Department, an impropriety so blatant that U.S. District Judge Charles R. Richey, a Nixon appointee, ruled that it must be terminated. Hugh W. Sloan, Jr., former White House staff member and treasurer of the committee, resigned abruptly on July 14 after the FBI had begun its investigation, citing "personal" reasons in a manner reminiscent of John Mitchell's resignation. The GAO's Office of Federal Elections is investigating the mysterious handling of a $25,000

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check which a Republican contributor insists he delivered personally to Maurice Stans, former Secretary of Commerce and now in charge of finances in Nixon's campaign. The check, without proper endorsement, was deposited in the Miami account of one of the "burglars." Since the check was delivered to Stans on April 10, after the new campaign financing legislation went into effect, several possible violations of that law are indicated. To top it all, Stans remains, at this writing, "unavailable," a status which the press accepts as entirely normal and proper, even in an election year. All the while the White House maintains a "taut silence" or "low profile" which the media seem quite unwilling to challenge. This is not a minor incident. It is as though the Committee to Re-Elect the President and assorted White House personnel had been caught in a conspiracy to obstruct justice. Yet the remarkable clamming up is not questioned by the press. Similarly, Lawrence O'Brien's contention that a special prosecutor should be appointed is irrefutable, yet widespread editorial support has not been forthcoming. Unless the media start knocking soon on White House doors—and knocking loudly—the present "investigation," which is proceeding at a snail's pace, will drag on until well after November 7.

On this smothered issue the pro-Nixon New York *Daily News* has been more pertinent than the liberal press and the network news programs. "The public has now sniffed enough smoke to become convinced that someone—or perhaps several someones—in the Republican ranks was playing with fire. If its suspicions are correct, Mr. Nixon is the man who stands to get singed unless he acts to expose and expel any culprits found to be connected with his campaign operations. He certainly owes no loyalty to men who betrayed his trust." Of course if they did not betray his trust, then his loyalty to them is understandable, if not exactly admirable. CAREY MCWILLIAMS

Mindless Pursuit

The implacable, mindless pursuit of the Harlem Six—now the Harlem Four—by the District Attorney's office in New York City is hard to understand, however one looks at it. *The Nation* has kept a watch on the case since James Baldwin first wrote about it in our issue of July 11, 1966. Later, we published an article by Ralph Blumenfeld, February 28, 1972, and two editorials: August 16, 1971 and February 14, 1972. A summary will therefore suffice to remind readers of the facts.

The case arose out of the fatal stabbing of a woman who, with her husband, operated a second-hand clothing store in Harlem. The public was understandably agitated at the time by a series of muggings and the somewhat sensational reporting of the activities of a so-called Blood Brotherhood, a gang said to be operating in Harlem.

The police were under pressure to find the six young men, all blacks, who were alleged to have done the killing, and they apprehended six teen-agers. There have been three full-dress trials involving these once young defendants. The first, which resulted in a verdict of guilty, was reversed by the Court of Appeals. One defendant was convicted in a separate trial in 1970. Another pleaded guilty—he now alleges that the plea was coerced. These two are in prison, appealing their sentences. The remaining four were tried again, in 1971. The jury was deadlocked 11 to 1 for conviction. They were tried again and early this year the jury voted 7 to 5 for acquittal. During this long ordeal the defendants were kept in prison, so it may be said truthfully that they more or less grew up in prison—they were not released on bail until recently. Contrary to the usual pattern, if they were criminals originally, their eight years in jail have rehabilitated them. Ronald Felder has been admitted to City College, beginning in September; William Craig hopes to attend Harlem Prep; Walter Thomas works with Felder as a legal aide at the Morrisania Legal Services Clinic; and Wallace Baker is interested in community work. Craig is now 25, Felder and Thomas 26, Baker 27.

Some features of the prosecution are dubious. Evidence was recently unearthed that a probation officer had offered testimony that one of the witnesses in the case had committed perjury. Later the probation officer denied his testimony. Finally, after lengthy deliberation, the judge hearing the current case set it down for still another trial, to begin on September 5.

In the meantime, the state's key witness, Robert Barnes, serving time at Dannemora for armed robbery and up for parole in November, abjured his earlier testimony completely. He has signed a 38-page affidavit stating that his testimony was "totally untrue." Still more recently, he recanted his recantation! Or so the Deputy District Attorney in charge of the prosecution contends.

The police and legal work in the case was sloppy, to use the most charitable term. Among other irregularities, a key witness says he rehearsed his testimony with the District Attorney some forty-eight times.

After the second hung jury, *The Nation* urged that the case be dismissed. It was a shaky case at best: two juries could not agree, the defendants had served eight years apiece while the case was being tried, appealed and retried. The bizarre incident of the probation officer tipping off the defense that perjury had allegedly been committed and then repudiating this suggestion, the sensational recantation of Robert Barnes, plus time already served, indicate to us that a dismissal at this stage would best serve the ends of justice.

Squeeze Play

To the January 17th issue, *The Nation*'s Washington correspondent Robert Sherrill contributed "Nassikas Sets Your Gas Bill." In the June 26th issue, he followed up with "Energy Crisis: The Industry's Fright Campaign." Unfortunately, some 40 million gas consumers fail to read *The Nation* and there has been only sparse coverage of the facts behind the much touted "energy crisis" in the mass media. The typical consumer groans when his gas bill goes up, but he fails to realize that the "energy crisis" is in large part contrived to transfer billions of dollars from the public to corporate treasuries, without any assurance that part of the gains so realized will be used to tap the known enormous reserves of gas.

The John Nassikas about whom Sherrill wrote is chairman of the Federal Power Commission. He is by no means a tool of the interrelated oil and gas interests

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(about 75 per cent of the natural gas supply in the United States is controlled by some twenty oil companies); he just thinks the same way they do. Presumably that is one reason why President Nixon appointed him: the President thinks that way too. Under Nassikas the FPC prefers to get its figures from industry sources, which are eager to supply them. Some unhappy members of the commission's staff leaked to Jack Anderson intra-staff memos indicating that the producers' gas reserve figures were 42 per cent below staff estimates.

Mostly that is the way the industry has been regulated —to use the term in its loosest sense—since the Natural Gas Act was passed in 1938. The intent of Congress was to base the price of interstate gas on production cost plus a fair return, but the FPC construed that to apply only to the cost of transportation via pipeline, without regard to the cost of the fuel at the wellhead. The Supreme Court refused to go along with this absurd limitation but from 1954, when its decision was handed down, to 1960, the FPC managed to stall. In 1960, however, President Kennedy appointed Joseph Swidler, now head of the New York Public Service Commission, as chairman of the FPC; the result was a rollback in gas rates of $215 million a year. To add to this unparalleled injury, the temporarily rejuvenated FPC ordered a rollback of some $500 million in overcharges.

Eventually the industry's trauma was relieved by the sympathetic Mr. Nixon and his man Nassikas. The FPC began to increase the price significantly, while pretending that only nominal changes were involved. The actual 1971 hike was $4 billion, but that is only a beginning. With the energy crisis in full career, and few consumers suspecting that keeping gas in short supply is industry policy winked at by the FPC, the industry looks forward to happier days. On August 3 the FPC, backed by the Administration, announced that present ceilings could be ignored. "The new policy," Edward Cowan reported in *The New York Times* of the following day, "is likely to lead to higher prices for household and industrial users. How soon and how much higher were unknown." With three Republican members, one Democrat and one vacancy on the commission, one can expect the worst.

In the farther distance, moreover, the industry envisions a world still more to its liking. Senator Tower of Texas congratulates the FPC on its "most courageous stand." The free market, he says, will set the price so as to "stimulate" exploration for new domestic reserves. But why try to regulate prices at all, if the market will do it? Indeed, that is precisely the direction in which the thoughts of Nixon, Nassikas, Tower, et al. are tending.

Clarifying the Hatch Act

In a 2-to-1 decision, a three-judge panel of the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., has declared a key section of the Hatch Act unconstitutional. The decision is unquestionably sound, in that the provisions of the Act are too broad and vague. As Judge Gerhard A. Gesell, one of our finest jurists, noted, the Act as drafted and currently interpreted has a "chilling effect" on the exercise of constitutional rights by federal employees. Restrictions are necessary, but "may not be achieved by means which sweep unnecessarily broadly into First Amendment areas" of free speech and association.

The decision does not demolish the Hatch Act. In fact, for the present it changes nothing, since the court enjoined the Civil Service Commission from enforcing the Act as it stands, but stayed the injunction until the Supreme Court can rule on an expected government appeal. All the judges did was reopen a question that urgently calls for clarification, in the interest of government employees and society at large.

The Hatch Act has an involved history, part of which long antedates the passage of the law in 1939-1940. That legislation in some form was necessary is shown by the fact that it incorporates—by reference only—more than 3,000 rulings made by the Civil Service Commission between 1886 and 1940, but without attempting to reconcile this hodgepodge with First Amendment rights of expression. The three-judge panel went through this earlier mass of verbiage and found that government employees had been disciplined for such activities as betting on an election, disparaging the President, writing a political letter or article, failing to discourage the political activity of a spouse, wearing a political button while on duty, etc. The Act then blandly declared that an employee "retains the right to vote as he chooses and to express his opinion on political subjects and candidates."

Nevertheless in 1947 the Act was upheld by what is called a "short Court"—seven Justices of the Supreme Court. The decision was 4 to 3 and based on narrow grounds. It may be that the Justices in favor felt that since it was "clean politics" legislation, and Congress showed no intention of clarifying the situation, for the moment there was nothing better to be done. However, widespread dissatisfaction found expression in California Supreme Court decisions in 1964 and 1966, where the majority argued that state provisions patterned on the federal Act were too broad and too vague. And in *The Nation* (October 26, 1969) Charles O. Jones, who had been a member of the Commission on Political Activity of Government Personnel in 1966 and 1967, predicted that the Hatch Act as it then stood (and still stands) would be declared unconstitutional if it ever reached the Supreme Court again. It had been passed, Jones pointed out, during the Great Depression and with an increasing complexity of problems affecting the WPA and other government bodies created to cope with unemployment.

The confusion in which the Act was born and sustained has not diminished. In the August 6th *New York Times* Robert M. Smith asked whether a federal employee could make a speech at a rally held by a political party. Could he participate in voter registration drives? Could he put a political sticker on his car? Could he even become involved in such local issues as civil rights and taxes and, one might add, such furiously debated issues as zoning ordinances? A survey in 1967 among 1,000 federal employees, involving these and other activities, showed that only about one person in three understood what he could or could not do in six or more of the situations stipulated. In short, Congress, the Civil Service Commission, the employees and about everybody else involved are bogged down and sinking deeper every year.

Judge Gesell and his colleagues have forced a full-scale

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review by Congress of what was billed originally as "An Act to prevent pernicious political activities." The intention was good; the duty Congress must now assume is to pass a new act to protect the merit system without being unconstitutionally restrictive of First Amendment rights.

Trouble with the Reactors

Something unpleasant, even ominous, is happening in the nuclear power industry. In the News and Comment section of *Science* (July 28) Robert Gillette describes trouble with the reactors of five nuclear power plants, one in Switzerland, four in the United States. A typical reactor consists of a bundle of more than 20,000 hollow zirconium alloy rods filled with pellets of uranium oxide fuel. In the affected reactors, a sizable proportion of the rods—some 10 per cent in one case—have been damaged, as if "squeezed in a vise" by the heat and pressure within the reactor. Such damage may result in leakage of fuel which, though still contained within the reactor vessel, poses unknown hazards in the event of a major loss of cooling water. Even if no leakage were to occur under normal power generating conditions, the engineers don't know how rods so distorted would behave in an emergency situation.

All the suspect reactors, together with their fuel, were manufactured by Westinghouse. The happier solution to the problem would be if the Westinghouse factory were found to have been remiss in filling and inspecting rods; that would be corrected in future manufacture. But it is also possible that a generic cause will crop up in all future large reactors. In general, the bigger the plant, whether utilizing uranium or conventional fuel, the lower the cost of each kilowatt-hour it supplies. The plants in which this trouble has developed run to 500 megawatts on the average, but the manufacturers have been receiving orders for 1,200-megawatt units. And, as if Consolidated Edison did not have enough troubles, its 873-megawatt Indian Point No. 2 reactor near Peekskill, N.Y., for which the Atomic Energy Commission has not yet issued an operating license, contains the same arrangement of fuel as do the four U.S. plants now under investigation.

This problem gives added weight to doubts voiced by engineers both within the electric power industry and outside. Is it wise, even aside from nuclear hazards, to put so many eggs in one basket? Con Ed has a conventional 1,000-megawatt generator, "Big Allis," which, running at full power, accounts for well over 100 per cent of the company's generating capacity. When a 400-megawatt machine breaks down it is much less serious than the loss of a machine of twice that capacity, or larger.

Nuclear plants introduce the additional element of risk in the event of an accident. The risk is small in percentage terms; even so, critics of the race to "gigantism" are talking of a moratorium on further nuclear reactor power increases. Until the engineers find out what is happening within the cores of the problem reactors, that seems the only prudent course.

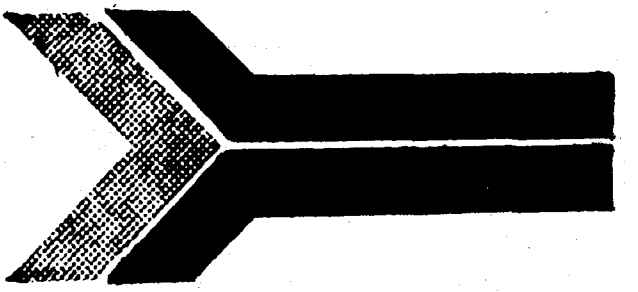
AMTRAK: ASLEEP AT THE SWITCH

RICHARD HEBERT

Mr. Hébert is a free-lance journalist in Washington, D.C., specializing in transportation issues. He is the author of Highways to Nowhere: The Politics of City Transportation, *to be published this fall by Bobbs-Merrill.* *This report on Amtrak was made possible by a grant from the Fund for Investigative Journalism.*

When Amtrak celebrated its first birthday this spring, some of the press declared that, because the quasi-governmental corporation had failed to turn the country's dying railroad passenger service into a profitable venture, the experiment was a failure. Edwin E. Edel, Amtrak's vice president for public affairs, complains bitterly that the judgment was premature, that one year for such a task was hardly a "fair trial."

Yet most indicators show that another year from now Amtrak will ask to be relieved of a large number of its routes, possibly as many as thirty or forty trains—including the cross-country runs that are the backbone of "national" rail service. As Amtrak President Roger Lewis told *U.S. News & World Report* in February, "Fiscal year 1974 looms as a watershed year for us. . . . If we run a train for two or three years, and people still don't ride it, then that service ought to be dropped."



The legislation that set up Amtrak required that it keep its basic national route system going until July 1, 1973. This year, when the U.S. Senate seriously considered extending that freeze to 1975, both Lewis and Transportation Secretary John A. Volpe registered vigorous—and successful—opposition. They apparently don't want to be saddled with a national system, much less with being forced to try to make such a system work.

The only parts of its skeletal national system that Amtrak has shown signs of wanting to save when the freeze is lifted next year are its 200-to-500-mile urban "corridor" routes, primarily on the eastern seaboard, most particularly the highly touted New York-Washington trains of high-speed, electrically powered Metroliners, the

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only Amtrak runs that turn a profit so far. In effect, if Amtrak gets its way, the ailing national system of passenger railroading that Congress created Amtrak to modernize and save will be dead and buried next year.

Two years ago, when Congress determined to save national passenger railroad service, it considered two basic options—outright subsidy to existing railroad companies and creation of an entirely new, tax-backed corporation to assume train operations. It chose the latter course believing it would mean a totally new management approach to railroading, vigorous and innovative leadership that could revive service that old-style railroad management was allowing to die and was eager to be rid of. New management is exactly what Amtrak supporters in Congress now believe they have *not* gotten from the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, Amtrak's official name.

Amtrak got a bargain when it bought its fleet of 1,200 cars from existing railroads for about $16 million (their "book value" was about $60 million, according to Lewis), but as Sen. Vance Hartke (D., Ind.) remarks, it was no "exhibit of graciousness in the hearts of the railroads. This was absolutely a distress sale, and that is all there was to it." The railroads simply had no other place to sell the passenger cars. To top it off, the railroads stopped servicing and maintaining the cars long before they were turned over to Amtrak. Amtrak has had to pay for the service neglect of the past with chronic equipment breakdowns.

Probably the best indicator of Amtrak's attitude about its assignment is the contract it signed with the twenty railroads that chose to "buy into" Amtrak. Southern Railway, the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad and the Georgia Railroad are the only American roads that chose to continue passenger operations outside Amtrak. The twenty other lines agreed to pay a total of $197 million over a three-year span for the right to drop their service. In exchange, the twenty railroads received tax credits or—if they preferred—common stock in Amtrak at $10 a share. Only four of the twenty lines—the Burlington Northern, the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific (Milwaukee), the Grand Trunk and the Penn Central—opted for stock. As the only stockholders, the four elect three of Amtrak's eleven board members, and those are the presidents of the railroads that hold the most stock—Burlington Northern, the Milwaukee and the Penn Central. Under law, no railroad is allowed to hold more than one-third of the stock when the three-year "buy-in" period ends in 1974, but the buy-in formula makes it virtually certain that Penn Central, the country's most spectacular case of fiscal and railroading irresponsibility, will "own" more than half of Amtrak. According to an Interstate Commerce Commission study of the quasi-public corporation, "Amtrak is not concerned at this time about this possible circumstance."

Of additional concern to Congress and the public should be the fact that the stock provisions give the three railroad board members healthy incentive to trim away all but the most profitable routes of the system to hasten the day when Amtrak stock will bring those railroads income on what once was a financial drain.

The contracts between Amtrak and the railroads provide no penalties should the railroads default on their "buy-in" payments. In fact, the contracts are devoid of almost all customary reward or penalty provisions. Fourteen of the contracted railroads are operating Amtrak trains. (The others didn't have routes where Amtrak wanted to go.) For this service, Amtrak pays anticipated monthly operating costs ahead of time and gets reimbursed only after the bills come in, should they come in low. The net effect is that the operating railroads are guaranteed they won't have to put up a cent for passenger service, even for a short time.

Furthermore, as the Senate Commerce Committee points out, "Amtrak must pay the railroads for whatever the identifiable expenses may be, less revenues, plus specific overrides for undefined avoidable costs and for liability. Accordingly, the railroads actually have an incentive to *increase* the actual costs which can be billed to Amtrak." (Italics in committee report.) Any displeasure Amtrak might have with railroads under such contracts it has to settle through cumbersome arbitration proceedings. It has no other weapon.

Retired Gen. Frank S. Besson, Jr., an Amtrak board member, tried to defend the contracts before a subcommittee of the Senate Commerce Committee by contending, "We have got people of good will here who have signed contracts, and they say they are going to use their best efforts, and, in my opinion, they will indeed do that." However, Senator Hartke reminded him, "These same people have been operating with good will before, and the good will has not been very satisfactory for the good interests of the people." He also pointed out that, in contrast to reliance on "good will," when the U.S. Department of Transportation earlier signed a contract with the Penn Central to run the demonstration Metroliner project, it wrote in a $1,000 fine for each train the Penn Central runs unsatisfactorily.

Nor is Amtrak aggressive in policing its agreements to be certain the railroads don't succumb to the temptation to run up costs and run down service. It has authority to audit railroad company books to be sure that billings to Amtrak are fair and accurate. In mid-1971 Amtrak officials promised Congress they would be back at the start of 1972 with audits of May 1971 railroad billings. The initial audits were completed to set "ground rules," according to Amtrak, but they have not been made public or presented to Congress. Since then, continuing audits are being made of railroad billings, but when "discrepancies" are found they are "reconciled" in private negotiations between Amtrak and the operating roads, according to Amtrak's Edel. The only "report" that Congress gets to see is what is reflected in the final numbers tallied in Amtrak's monthly financial reports, and those don't reflect "the things that are still up for discussion or negotiations," Edel said.

It is natural that railroad companies thrive now that they are off the passenger service hook and operating under the benevolent umbrella of Amtrak. In fact, quarterly reports submitted to the ICC reveal that during the first three months of 1972, only two of the fourteen railroads operating trains for Amtrak had failed to increase net

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revenues over the same period of 1971, the last full quarter in which those railroads ran their own passenger service. Some of the companies showed rather astounding net revenue growth, considering the hard economic times generally: 12 per cent for the Southern Pacific; 13 per cent for the Union Pacific; 17 per cent for the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac; 46 per cent for the Burlington Northern; and 87 per cent for the "bankrupt" Penn Central.

While a good deal for the railroads, Amtrak has proven to be a less than satisfactory deal for the paying and riding public. The flow of customer complaints continues unabated. Service is often surly. Telephones go unanswered for long periods. In light of modern technology and its application in related fields—air travel and hotel accommodations, for instance—train reservation and ticketing systems are outmoded nuisances, yet Amtrak opposes a proposed ICC regulation for a reservation and information service that would be available anywhere anytime—a nationwide toll-free telephone service, for example. Amtrak says there's "no basis at this time for concluding that Amtrak's efforts to date . . . (to improve its reservations system) have been insufficient." It even argues that most of the thirteen different reservations systems it inherited from the railroads last year perform "reasonably well."

With a wide range of options for new customer service open to them, railroad personnel instead seem bent on denying such service. Baggage cars were terminated on a number of routes. Amtrak plans to promote the use of trains to transport bicyclists and their bikes from Washington, D.C., to Harper's Ferry, W. Va., or Cumberland, Md., for weekend outings along the 180-mile historic Chesapeake and Ohio barge canal—but not until autumn, when the bicycle season wanes.

Amtrak accurately blames its problems with customer treatment on the fact that customers are handled not by Amtrak personnel but by the same railroad personnel who ignored and mistreated customers for twenty-five years for the railroads. As Senator Hartke points out, "Whenever Amtrak wants to correct a deficiency in service standards or operating efficiency, it cannot deal directly with the personnel concerned, but must channel a request for action through the railroad. This process is at best cumbersome and time-consuming, and at worst completely ineffective because of insufficient incentive on the part of the railroad." And, as Sen. Lowell P. Weicker, Jr. (R., Conn.), adds, "If we run the same cars, the same locomotives, over the same roadways, with the same attendant baggage handling, food service, scheduling, ticket services, and so forth, we will end up with the same deficit."

Before it can hope to improve service significantly, Amtrak must assume direct operational control—collecting its own fares, paying its own bills and paying service personnel with its own Amtrak pay checks. Yet the corporation has moved only timidly in this direction, frightened by the wide range of unions, contracts and other entanglements involved. It brought all employees at the consolidated Chicago Union Terminal under its own roof, but that is as far as it has gone.

If its handling of the personnel problem is curiously timid, Amtrak's handling of its equipment is baffling. The entire fleet is being refurbished and painted the Amtrak colors. When asked whether or not the spruced-up cars are drawing increased ridership, Amtrak's Edel says that such results won't start being known until after the entire fleet is spruced up in mid-1973—the very time that Amtrak will have decided what routes it wants to keep and what to scrap. (It's also noteworthy that Amtrak's best cars have been moved out of the West to the East Coast runs.)

Amtrak's promotional activity is similarly indicative of what's to be saved of the passenger railroad system. During May and June 1971 (the only data available), almost three-fourths of all its advertising resources went into the urban Northeast—New York, Boston, Washington, Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis and intermediate markets—with a full one-third of that devoted to the Metroliners alone. It is no wonder that, with new cars, high-speed service, frequent trains and high-budget advertising, the Metroliners are Amtrak's only moneymakers. In contrast to the Metroliners' 25 per cent of the total advertising budget, the entire West Coast, from Seattle to San Diego, received only 17 per cent.

In addition to its problems with personnel and equipment, Amtrak also has roadbed trouble. Because railroads were mostly interested in freight hauling over the past several decades—and wanted to haul the longest trains over the longest distances with the fewest locomotives possible, and thus ran at low speeds—the quality of track beds in many places was allowed to decline through poor or nonexistent maintenance. By way of example, 70 miles of track between Chicago and Cincinnati are in such poor state that trains—including Amtrak's passenger runs—are held to a 30-mile-per-hour speed limit. According to the National Association of Railroad Passengers, the Chicago-Cincinnati passenger run these days takes longer than it did in 1898.

Because of poor track, poor equipment and conflicts with freight trains wanting to use the same track at the same time, Amtrak continues to have its woes with keeping its operations on time, nothing new to railroad passengers. But it has discovered a novel way of keeping on schedule: padding the timetable. Thus a spot comparison of long-distance train schedules effective when Amtrak first went into business in May 1971, with those in effect a year later, shows that on several of its runs, small doses of ten and fifteen minutes have been added to the scheduled time.

The timetable trip from Chicago to Miami is now five hours and fifteen minutes longer, including a one-hour layover in Jacksonville, and from Miami to Chicago, it's eight hours and ten minutes longer, with two hours' wait in Jacksonville; from Miami to New York on the Silver Star, an hour and ten minutes more, and in reverse, a half hour more; and from Seattle to San Diego, almost a half hour more in each direction. In partial result, Amtrak was able to proudly announce this past May that its trains during the first three months of 1972 were "on time" 81 per cent of the time, up from 74 per cent performance the previous three months.

Amtrak didn't get around to releasing its "on time" scorecard for January through March until mid-May, largely because it has yet to develop procedures for

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"prompt, complete and accurate information of operating results," something urged a year ago by the ICC. The ICC report has repeated complaints that information wasn't available, both because of Amtrak reluctance to make relevant figures public and its lack of data-gathering procedures.

Even more remarkable than Amtrak's failure to collect data is its unwillingness to make information public, even when it is *favorable* to the supposed Amtrak cause. For instance, Amtrak has prepared graphs that show the trend in ridership on each of thirty-seven basic routes since last August. As of May, only four showed a consistent declining trend in ridership, and most of those were minor. Seven of the thirty-seven graphs show sizable *increases* in ridership trends. The remaining graphs show at least that, by and large, the decline in railroad ridership has been stemmed, if not turned about-face. Yet Amtrak officials guard the graphs carefully and refuse to release them for publication.

Senator Hartke is one of Congress' sharpest critics of Amtrak's conduct. During hearings on increased funding he told Amtrak President Lewis:

> . . . (C)ustomers are not going to increase under the present "business as usual" circumstances. You can say it is not "business as usual," but it is "business as usual" at least to what they have been told. One ride on the train, and they will go back to the plane. That is your problem.

And earlier in the same hearing:

> . . . I do not see anything in what you were talking about which has the bold initiative, which has that experiment in operations and in concepts which could capture the imagination of the riding public. . . . I would rather see you try and fail than not see you try at all. I would rather see you do something and say, "We tried it out but it did not work." I said I would be with you if you did that. . . .

In addition to the $197 million railroads are paying Amtrak in "buy-in" fees over the three initial years, Amtrak initially received from Congress $40 million in grants and $100 million in guaranteed loan authority. The grant money was to be for start-up and initial operations, the loans and railroad payments for capital improvements—new trains, locomotives, etc. Amtrak began train operations on May 1, 1971, and by July the $40 million was used up. From then to October, Amtrak used the railroads' "buy-in" payments (about $5.5 million a month) to cover operating losses; it expected to have to dip into its $100 million capital loan fund to cover operating deficits by November 1971. That brought it back to Congress to ask for more funds.

At first it wanted $260 million (plus $10 million for interest on debts) to cover operating deficits through June 1973—enough to allow its capital funds to remain free for capital improvements—the only thing that can possibly lure significantly more riders into trains. The Office of Management and Budget "took a different view," according to Amtrak's Lewis. OMB assumed that since Amtrak's entire route structure was going to undergo complete review in mid-1973, no capital program should be planned that might need drastic revision beyond then. OMB gave Amtrak leave to ask for only $170 million, thereby forcing Amtrak to pour its capital funds down the operating deficit drain.

One of the stranger aspects of this move was that it received the backing of a special Financial Advisory Panel created for Amtrak by Congress and appointed by President Nixon. The panel consists largely of what Sen. Lee Metcalf (D., Mont.) said are "the very people, the very financial institutions, the very bankers that led us into this situation, that failed to finance new equipment, new rolling stock, that failed to take care of the growth of the railroads. . . ." Elected chairman of the panel was Daniel W. Hofgren, an investment banker with the financial firm of Goldman Sachs, which figured in the selling of Penn Central commercial paper before the giant's declaration of bankruptcy. Concerning the then pending authorizations, Hofgren wrote the Senate Commerce Committee on behalf of the panel:

> In the usual case, the panel would have had some concern about the recommendation of an appropriation of only $170 million, instead of the $260 million required for operations through June 30, 1973. The appropriation of $170 million will require that most of the $100 million in guaranteed loans that were designed primarily for capital purposes be used for operating purposes. In this special case, however, the panel does not have this concern, because it regards the period up to June 30, 1973, as an experimental period. It is the period during which Amtrak is required by law to operate service over all routes of the basic system.

The panel and Amtrak apparently see no difference between a period of "experiment" and one in which the same old system is run grudgingly because the law requires it.

The Senate voted out the full $270 million (it considered going even higher) but the House held to the $170 million officially sought by Amtrak. In conference committee a compromise was struck authorizing $225 million in outright grants for operating costs and another $100 million in loan guarantees—half now and half on July 1, 1973, after the so-called "experimental period." If Amtrak actually got these funds, it still would mean that possibly close to $50 million in operating deficits would have to be covered by capital funds, assuming current projections by Amtrak are accurate. The actual appropriation is at the $170 million level, however, forcing a full $100 million in operating costs to be covered by capital funds. (It should be noted that before Amtrak, railroads were losing a reported $460 million a year.

Most remarkable is that during the debate over increasing Amtrak authorizations, President Lewis told *The Wall Street Journal* that Amtrak couldn't "sensibly commit" more than the $170 million—in the face of the fact that all of it would have to go, not to improve rail passenger service significantly but simply to keep the trains running as they always have.

That isn't surprising in light of the team assembled for Amtrak. Lewis himself was board chairman and president of General Dynamics, the aerospace firm involved in the multibillion-dollar debacle known as the TFX, the Robert McNamara scheme to build an all-purpose, all-service jet fighter. Besides the three railroad presidents, the other Presidentially appointed members on the Amtrak board include the Secretary of Transportation (by law); retired General Besson, former chairman of the Pentagon's Joint

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Logistics Review Board; John J. Gilhooley, former president of the New York Transit Authority; Charles Luna, former president of the United Transportation Union; and David W. Kendall and David E. Bradshaw, both attorneys. An eighth Presidential appointee is required to be a consumer representative. The seat remains vacant; the nomination of Rose M. Fanucchi of San Francisco, an attorney long active in Italian-American civic, health, welfare and political organizations, is pending in the Senate.

Even Lewis' management team is heavy with the voices of the cautious who have every reason to hold preconceived notions that railroad passenger service is unrevivable as a national system, and that only urban "corridor" service is worth any large investment of time, energy, funds or brainpower.

In addition to Lewis, two come from the air industry, chief competitor of rails: Marketing Vice President Harold L. Graham, formerly at Pan American World Airways, and director of Congressional Affairs Elmer E. Jones, formerly a consultant to the Aerospace Industries Association and a vice president for National Airlines. Two other top-pay executives can claim prior experience with railroads: Vice President for Planning David A. Watts, who held a similar job with the Chesapeake & Ohio and Baltimore & Ohio Railroads, and Vice President for Operations Harold Wanaselja, who was with the New Haven Railroad and the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority. As Rep. Lionel Van Deerlin (D., Calif.) points out, "Neither (rail) line earned plaudits for recent efforts on behalf of passenger comfort or convenience." Still another who comes with a railroader's background—and, likely, a traditional railroader's disbelief in the value of national passenger service—is Amtrak's Vice President for Public Affairs Edwin Edel, who was with the American Association of Railroads before going to the Federal Railroad Administration and then on to Amtrak. Edel vividly demonstrates his—and possibly Amtrak's—attitude toward the railroad riding public and his Congressionally defined Amtrak task when he bemoans "the bad press we've gotten . . . from Congressmen who don't understand the bill yet, even though they voted for it twice."

The reluctance on the part of Amtrak's board and management to inject new and aggressive ideas into the running of passenger railroad service can only be explained in terms that assume from the start that the service is unsalvageable. It appears now that Amtrak never intended to actually *save* the national network of rail service. Instead, it intended to use the "experimental" period as a time of grace during which railroads would pay a "buy-in" fee to help taxpayers keep service going until it could be officially laid to rest in I-told-you-so fashion, never proved because never really tested by the "new" management Congress assigned the job. In the process the railroads will have been saved from the burden of continuing cost, as well as the uncomfortable task of finally killing off the service.

Congress has been so unimpressed with the conduct of its "new" railroad management that it wrote into its authorizations act this year a ceiling on salaries that effectively slices by more than half the annual pay of Amtrak's chief executive. Until the act became law Lewis was drawing $125,000 a year; now he makes the new legal limit—$60,000—the same as top pay for Cabinet members. Amtrak officials vigorously opposed the salary ceiling provision—but unsuccessfully. A clause in the act authorizes salaries above $60,000 only insofar as Amtrak shows a profit. Since the easiest way of showing a profit is to kill off the losers—what Edel calls "real cats and dogs" that "will never make it"—and save only the best runs, the Metroliners, for instance, it would be ironic if this provision, originally intended as an incentive to save national railroad service, became an incentive toward the opposite end: the death of the *national* network of passenger trains in the name of "saving" urban corridor service. □

DEFENSE SPENDING

The Dead Weight of SALT

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Washington

Looking back at the partial nuclear test ban treaty and the negligible effects it had on defense costs, the lack of a follow-up comprehensive test ban, and the long years it took to complete SALT I, there can be little assurance that a more effective agreement will be signed or that another treaty will in fact reduce the defense budget. The Administration seems to be saying that defense cuts can be expected to come only at the successful conclusion of SALT II, if at all. So much for the old saw that the way to slow down the arms race and lower the level of military spending is through bilateral arms reduction agreements. There is only one way to limit what we spend on arms, as Rep. Otis Pike (D., N.Y.) said while debating this year's military procurement bill, and that is just plain to limit what we spend on arms.

The ABM agreement—placing a ceiling of two ABM sites on each nation, one at a land-based missile complex, the other around a capital city—has had the immediate effect of halting work on two of the three sites where construction was under way. Of the $1.5 billion requested in the budget for the three sites, $692 million is no

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longer needed. The Pentagon wants to plow $110 million of that amount back into other strategic programs, leaving a net reduction in current ABM costs of $582 million. The savings would be welcome but no cause for unrestrained joy. The long-term costs of what remains of the ABM program will actually rise above the pre-SALT level, according to the latest estimates, while the $110 million would be used to put the nation in hock to two more multibillion-dollar weapons programs.

The treaty serves to emphasize the almost total lack of confidence in the ABM. Few experts now believe that a "thick" nationwide system to protect population centers or a "thin" system to protect the Minuteman missiles would work. Until the bittersweet end in Moscow the Pentagon fought for the twelve-site thin system, estimated to cost $10.3 billion in 1969. Congress had approved work on four sites and the cost of these, following the usual pattern of cost-overruns, was estimated by the Army in February at $8 billion. Now the two sites permitted under the treaty are projected at close to $9 billion, not counting the billions appropriated by Congress in previous years to pay for anti-ballistic missile work under the various names it has held (Nike-Zeus, Nike-X, Sentinel, etc.). The cost of the two sites may well exceed the 1969 price tag put on the twelve-site program.

Proponents will argue that the purpose of a Washington ABM is to give the President, Joint Chiefs of Staff, members of Congress and other "command authorities" enough time to respond to an attack, not to defend the average Washingtonian. One reply to this is that arrangements have already been made for the protection of the national leadership in the event of war, through dispersal and redundancy of the command authority, and that the practical effects of an ABM around the capital city will be to attract a greater concentration of offensive missiles, thereby exposing it to greater destruction than it would suffer without an ABM.

More to the heart of the matter, the rationale that an ABM would give the command authorities precious time to react is inherently defective. If a missile attack were launched against the capital from the Soviet Union there would be a mere twenty minutes before their arrival. Missiles fired from Soviet submarines could take as few as five minutes. Detection, verification and the process of launching interceptor ABMs would consume part of the remaining time. Suppose the President was in Washington on the day of the attack and it was possible to reach him with the news. Would ABM give him time to react rationally to an attack? In that desperate moment he would have to order the ABM technicians to either launch or not launch. Maybe he would first use the hot line to call the Kremlin. The bumbling President Muffley in *Dr. Strangelove* did that much. But in this instance a phone call would eat up more time and its results would be indecisive, unless of course there was no answer. Ultimately he would have to act and his action would be based on insufficient information and without adequate time to consult his advisers. Anything he did in that instant could hardly be judged worthy of the enormous investment in ABM. If, to take the worst possible case, there was an attack under way he could not save himself because of the ineffectiveness of ABM. If there were a mistake and no attack was under way and he ordered the interceptors launched, he would have exposed millions of Americans to the consequences, including fallout from our own missiles and whatever countermeasures were taken by other countries. A decision to retaliate against the presumed aggressor, before the situation was properly evaluated, would risk everything and gain nothing.

Alternatively, it might be felt that the burden of making the decision under such circumstances is too heavy to place on the President and that it should be delegated to someone else, say, a military official, or entrusted to an automatic computer-controlled device. Perhaps the delegation of authority has already taken place. If so, one of the cardinal rules of U.S. national security, namely that only the President can personally authorize the use of nuclear weapons, has been secretly changed. The unauthorized bombing raids against North Vietnam ordered by Gen. John Lavelle and the tendency of sophisticated electronics to malfunction suggest the pitfalls of this sort of arrangement.

ABM could neither save the capital (or a Minuteman missile site for that matter) from destruction nor provide the President with the time to make an intelligent, moral decision. The question then is, why does the treaty provide for a capital-oriented ABM? The reason seems to be that because the Soviet Union constructed one around Moscow and we have one nearing completion at a Minuteman complex, the situation would be equalized if they were allowed to build a second ABM around a missile site while we built our second one around Washington. In effect, each government has agreed to embalm its own ABM mistake and to build a monument to the other's.

According to one line of reasoning, we should build the Washington ABM *because* it is useless. The United States should build it to assure the Russians we are abiding by the spirit of the agreement and do not intend to spend the money saved by going ahead with other strategic weapons. A defense analyst who recently left the Pentagon offered this explanation at a Congressional hearing as one that may be controlling, conceding that it might sound odd. Rep. Henry Reuss (D., Wis.) responded that it was odd in light of the failure of the Moscow agreement to include a mutual bankruptcy clause.

The Moscow pact contains the ABM treaty, a five-year interim agreement. The interim agreement places ceilings on the number of each country's fixed land-based missiles and submarine-based missiles for five years. Only those two types of weapons are covered by the agreement. There continue to be no ceilings on mobile land-based missiles, long-range bombers, tactical nuclear weapons, or most qualitative improvements on existing weapons such as the placing of multiple warheads on missiles that now have a single warhead, and the substitution of longer range missiles for the ones now deployed. There are thus large areas of nuclear weaponry not limited under the interim agreement and a major loophole with respect to the weapons that are covered—the right to make qualitative improvements.

Nuclear arms are a major influence on the level of

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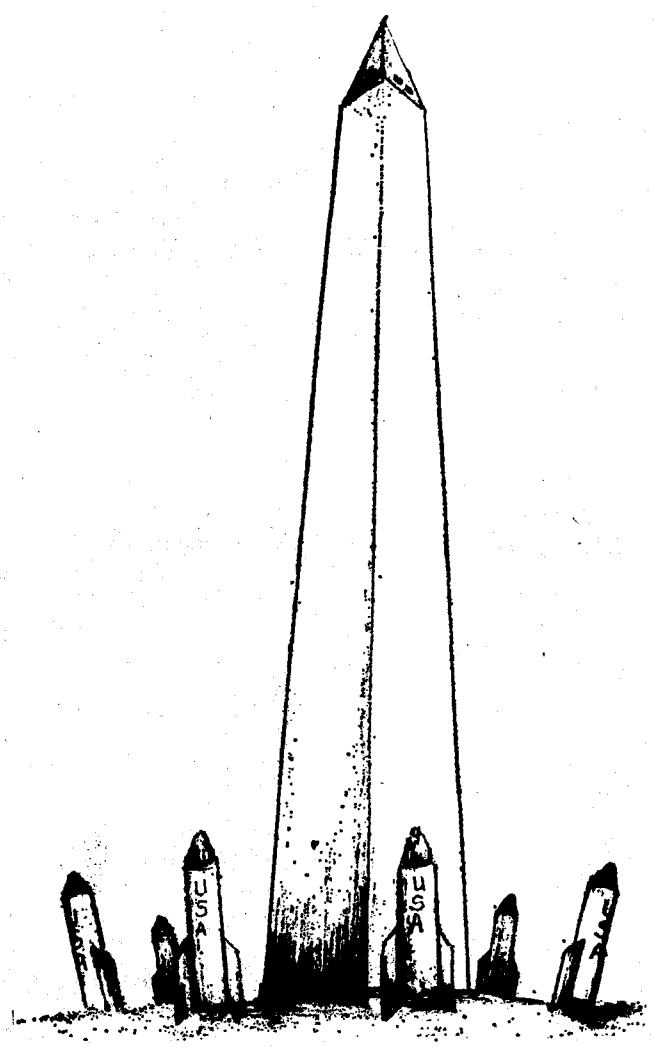
military spending, and a substantial lowering or raising of that level will in part depend on how much is spent for these weapons over the next few years. All the requests for offensive nuclear weapons in the defense budget fall outside the scope of the interim agreement. Requests for nuclear arms were increased by more than $1 billion in this year's budget and SALT seems only to have whetted the Pentagon's appetite for more.

Defense Secretary Laird and the Joint Chiefs of Staff have argued in several appearances before Congressional committees since the President returned from Moscow that their support is conditional on approval of all the offensive nuclear weapons in the budget plus one new program they would like to add. Presidential adviser Kissinger presents, for public consumption anyway, the more moderate view. He said, in reply to a question by Senator Fulbright at the June 15th White House briefing for members of Congress, that the agreements and the defense budget are being offered "on their merits," a not too subtle hint that Congress should feel free to approve the former while modifying the latter. But Kissinger is not the President.

The President appears to want to smooth over the Laird-Kissinger split by lending aid and comfort to both, but the net effect has been to strengthen the Pentagon's heavy hand. ". . . I owe it to you and to the nation," the President stated at the Congressional briefing, "to say that Mr. Brezhnev and his colleagues made it absolutely clear that they are going forward with defense programs in the offensive area which are not limited by these agreements." (The President did not say whether he made anything absolutely clear to Brezhnev and who made what absolutely clear to the other first.) Under these circumstances, he added, "for the United States not to go forward with its offensive programs, or worse, for the United States unilaterally to reduce its offensive programs would mean that any incentive that the Soviets had to negotiate the follow-on agreement would be removed."



David Gunderson, The Washington Post

In his June 21st press conference the President, acknowledging the "alleged controversy and contradictions" among Laird, Kissinger and himself, said that Congress should approve the agreements "on their merits" and then vote for the arms requests advocated by Laird. In the June 29th televised press conference he repeated the part about Brezhnev and his fear that the Russians would surpass us, and then said that had the agreements not been entered into he would have had to ask Congress to approve a $15 billion per year crash program for increased nuclear weapons.

The President is saying that we need to press on with those offensive weapons not covered by the agreement because (*1*) the Russians are going ahead with theirs and they could place us in a position of nuclear inferiority, and (*2*) arms escalation on our part will induce them to agree to further limitations. It does appear to a number of observers that the White House has tied the defense requests to the agreements and that Congress is being asked to consider them in tandem, if not as a single package. There is not much doubt that the President will get the Joint Chiefs the nuclear goodies they want, despite the excellent case that can be made that the Pentagon, America and the rest of the world would do well without them.

Many experts not in the direct employ of the Pentagon will freely admit that the requests for the two most costly offensive weapons, the Trident submarine and the B-1 bomber, represent unnecessary expenditures at the present time and that much of the rest of the strategic budget is pure padding. The Trident submarine (formerly called ULMS) is the more questionable. This year's request of about $1 billion is a nearly tenfold increase over last year's appropriations and represents a commitment to begin construction at a pace that will virtually guarantee large cost overruns and performance failures. The hasty decision to proceed now will lock the Navy into a design for the new system that could prove to be totally inadequate to meet whatever threat finally emerges to our present sea-based forces.

The existing force of Polaris submarines with their more than 650 missiles is considered invulnerable to attack and probably is by itself an effective nuclear deterrent. Most of the Polaris subs are being converted so they can take the larger Poseidon missiles, which are each capable of carrying up to fourteen multiple independently targeted warheads. When the conversion program is completed the United States will have more than 5,000 nuclear war-

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heads on submarines. The warheads on just two Poseidon subs could kill 25 per cent of the Russian population and destroy 50 per cent of its industrial capacity. The major difference between Poseidon and the proposed Trident is that Trident would carry more, larger and longer range missiles. Those who criticize Trident assert that with our present overkill capability we have more than enough nuclear missiles, and it is not necessary to build a new generation of submarines until it can be demonstrated that the Polaris/Poseidon fleet is threatened.

The original rationale for the Poseidon program was that the multiple warheads were needed to overwhelm a potential Soviet nationwide anti-ballistic missile program. The Soviet ABM was never built, except for the ineffective Moscow site, and probably never will be if SALT is ratified. Without a Soviet ABM, it can be argued, there is no reason to complete the Poseidon conversions, much less launch into Trident.

The counterargument rests largely on the Soviet buildup of Yankee class submarines, said to be comparable to Polaris, and land-based missiles. Without getting too far into the nuclear numbers game, it is known that at present rates of deployment the Russians will soon have more and larger land-based missiles and more missile subs than we. However, most of our land-based and sea-based missiles will be MIRVed, giving us many more nuclear warheads than they. The Soviets still do not have MIRV. Our missiles are also believed to be qualitatively better—more accurate and, in the case of Polaris/Poseidon versus Yankee, of greater range. Experts observe that in several respects the Russians are building the kinds of weapons we discarded long ago.

All of which demonstrates that there is no chance of the United States falling into a condition of nuclear inferiority, with or without Trident. On the contrary, the evidence strongly suggests that we now occupy a position of superiority despite the talk of U.S.-Soviet parity. But the central issue is whether the nuclear offensive capabilities of the potential enemy matters once your side has an invulnerable deterrent. As long as the Soviet Union cannot prevent the United States from retaliating against a first strike—and the agreement not to deploy ABM is an admission by both sides that there is no defense against the other's nuclear weapons—what difference does it make if they build additional missiles? Their warheads are no defense against our warheads, and vice versa.

The question may be avoided by insisting that we have to expand our offensive weapons so that we can be in a position to "bargain from strength." Implicit in the January announcement that Trident was being accelerated as a signal to the Soviets was our intention to play Trident as another bargaining chip in the SALT talks. Now it is being claimed that the ploy worked inasmuch as the agreements were signed, and it would be foolish to throw this chip away before the follow-on agreement is signed. Sen. John Stennis, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, apparently reversed his position on Trident because of this argument. At the White House Congressional briefing Stennis said that pushing the ABM had helped win the Moscow agreements and that "I am going all the way on ULMS now even though I had in mind supporting it only for a limited amount this year, and not on an all-out program." A month later the Trident proposal barely squeaked through the Senate committee on an 8-to-8 vote. The House Armed Services Committee expressed the same view as Stennis in its report approving all the Pentagon's requests for offensive nuclear weapons.

There is something to be said for the bargain-from-strength approach. Governments, private groups and individuals do better in bargaining situations when they have strong positions to bargain from. But this misses the important point about these particular negotiations. U.S. military strength should not be at issue in talks about nuclear arms as long as we have an effective nuclear deterrent, and no reasonable and informed person could doubt that we have one. When you have all the chips you need to stay in the game, the costs of additional chips may exceed the benefits they confer. More is not always better; even military planners do not favor acquiring more of everything. We stopped building land-based missiles because it was judged we had enough for the kind of nuclear force we wanted. We deliberately chose to build relatively small, accurate, multiple, independently targeted warheads rather than the jumbo size.

Choices must be made about the size and composition of the deterrent forces, not only because quantity does not always mean quality but because resources are not infinite. Our bargaining strength may be weakened if the cost of new programs has adverse political or economic effects.

As an addendum to its bargain-from-strength argument the Administration also asserts that no matter how bad you believe the present situation to be it will be worse and more expensive if its recommendations are not adopted. This assertion may be correct, because to the extent that the Executive branch controls policy, its forecasts of terrible things to come are self-fulfilling. If the Senate had failed to ratify the SALT treaty, for instance, the President could have requested funds for the twelve-site ABM program and insured an expenditure much larger, despite the uselessness of ABM. Or if funds for Trident were sharply reduced, the Administration could put off the SALT II talks on the ground that we do not have sufficient bargaining strength. The official arguments for the weapons increases are thus not based on good analysis of military requirements but on the assumption that the Executive branch can push Congress around on the issue of national security.

In addition to using the Moscow agreements as an occasion to beat the drums for its billion-dollar Tridents, the Pentagon is using its big guns to soften opposition to the B-1 bomber. The $445 million bomber request in this year's budget heralds the program's larger eventual costs, which could reach $20 billion for the fleet now planned, plus several billions more for tankers and missiles. It is not generally realized that the present bomber has, in effect, been MIRVed by making it possible for it to carry up to twenty air-to-surface missiles as well as gravity bombs. The existing force of B-52 bombers is seen by many experts to be sufficient for the backup strategic mission assigned to it. Having given up their anti-missile program, it seems improbable that the Russions will spend the sums necessary to build up their anti-bomber program.

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Our own air defense program ought to be questioned for the same reason. It makes little sense for the United States to maintain a bomber defense system for anything more than surveillance and protection against small attacks. The Soviet bomber force is much smaller than ours and aging, and the idea of defending against missile attacks has been abandoned. Yet a vast air defense modernization program is under way, making air defense one of the most expensive portions of the budget. This year more than $3 billion is being requested for the air defense system and more than $30 billion will be spent for it between now and the end of the decade unless plans are revised.

On top of all this, the Pentagon has asked for $60 million to accelerate the planned successor to the present ABM, called Site Defense of Minuteman, estimated to cost as much as $25 billion, and $20 million to begin a new nuclear submarine-based cruise missile program which could end up costing $2 billion. The cruise missile proposal has shocked arms experts such as Adrian Fisher, former deputy director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, who compares this idea with regressing to the German World War II V-1 buzz bombs. There may have been some justification for a low-level strategic cruise missile before SALT, when it could have been developed to penetrate a Soviet ABM. It is now so patently unnecessary that arms experts are speculating that Laird may have proposed it as a bargaining chip with Congress.

The people of Conrad, Mont. ought to be able to appreciate this last possibility. Conrad's dreams of unprecedented prosperity were interrupted when success in Moscow meant the end for the ABM site being constructed nearby. Now the town is stuck with a lot of unwanted newly developed homesites, vacant motels and overextended businesses, while a number of people face financial ruin and unemployment. "This community," said a local resident in an interview with *The National Observer,* "has been nothing more than a poker chip on the table of international negotiation." □

THE CANAL ZONE

LAST DITCH OF COLONIALISM

PENNY LERNOUX
Miss Lernoux is South American correspondent in Bogotá for Copley News Service.

Bogotá

Back in 1956 when John Foster Dulles was warning the British and the French to keep their hands off the Suez Canal, neither the State Department nor the Pentagon grasped the irony of the situation. It never crossed the minds of those in government that what was good for Egypt might also be good for Panama. Not surprisingly, the thought has since occurred to the Panamanians, who now are talking in earnest about nationalizing the Panama Canal rather than put up with Washington's intransigence in revising the 1903 Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty.

Gen. Omar Torrijos, Panama's tough, straight-talking strongman, already has threatened to march on the Canal Zone on two occasions. Washington bureaucrats who think he is bluffing could be in for a surprise. Torrijos may not be every Panamanian's idea of a benevolent dictator. (He heads the National Guard, Panama's combined police and armed forces, but is not the President, who is only a figurehead.) However, Torrijos has *machismo,* and the guts to stand up to the United States in a confrontation, a highly prized Latin American virtue wiping out all other sins in Panamanian eyes. Moreover, his impatience at the failure of the United States to come to terms with Panama over the elimination of an outdated colonial enclave is shared by all Panamanians, who to a man would march on the Canal Zone at Torrijos' orders.

"I'm no admirer of Torrijos," said a former cabinet minister's wife, "but I have to admit the man has the courage of his convictions." She was referring to an attempted countercoup in December 1969, following Torrijos' ouster of aging President Arnulfo Arias the previous year. While on a pleasure trip to Mexico, Torrijos was informed he had been replaced by other military officials and was offered a handsome "pension" to stay in Mexico City. Torrijos refused, hired a small plane and landed in Panama at dawn to begin a triumphant march on the capital, all of which was televised nationally. From that moment on, Torrijos was transformed from an obscure military officer into a national hero.

In delaying a Canal settlement, the United States also is postponing any solution to the drug traffic from Europe and South America which flows through Panama to the United States. Due to greater vigilance over the direct Atlantic route, large quantities of heroin, cocaine and marijuana are being shipped via Panama, a fact the Panamanian Government recognizes. "If we had more control over the Canal Zone, we might be able to exercise more control over the drug traffic," suggests Foreign Minister Juan Antonio Tack. From the Panamanian viewpoint, there is no reason to cooperate with the United States in solving its drug problem if the United States will not cooperate with Panama by abolishing its claim to "perpetual sovereignty" over the Canal Zone. U.S. Congressmen naturally want it the other way round, saying they will not consider a new treaty until Panama cracks down on the drug traffic.

Panamanian and U.S. representatives are now in the fourth round of negotiations since the January 1964 riots which resulted in the deaths of twenty-two Panamanians and four Americans. Both sides agree that the United States should administer the Canal and provide for its defense. The United States also is willing to return some

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of the unused land in the 553-sq.-mile Zone, and hand over certain administrative functions, such as postal facilities. What has stymied the talks is the United States' refusal to give Panama jurisdiction over Canal Zone courts, police and water supplies, in effect perpetuating the Zone's status as a "country within a country." The United States also wants the new treaty to extend into the 21st century at which time "Panama would have an option to terminate the treaty if a satisfactory new arrangement could not then be negotiated," says Ambassador David H. Ward, former deputy Under Secretary of the Army and now a Canal treaty negotiator. "This will end the perpetuity provision which has been a substantial cause of dispute over the years." Ward assumes, of course, that Panama is willing to wait another three or more decades.

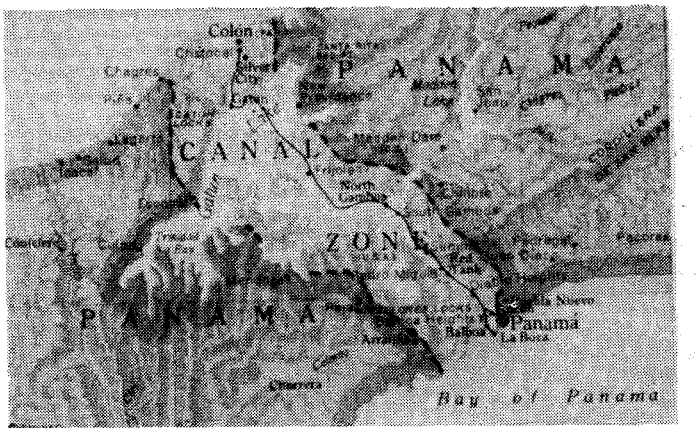
U.S. insistence that the Panama Canal must be "efficiently administered and securely defended" has been strongly influenced by the Pentagon, which the Panamanian Government and American employees of the Panama Canal Co. blame for U.S. intransigence. However Rear Adm. Gene La Roque, former director of the Inter-American Defense College and now head of the privately sponsored Center for Defense Information, believes the Southern Command headquartered in the Canal Zone (as well as the military groups in Latin America attached to it) should be phased out because it no longer influences or serves U.S. strategic interests.

Until the question of sovereignty is resolved, Panama will not discuss the issue of new Canal tolls or a second inter-oceanic canal. The government also says that the duration of the new treaty will depend on how favorable the terms are.

Foreign Minister Tack points out that if United Fruit, of all companies, can operate without problems under Panama's laws, there is no reason why Canal Zone residents cannot do the same. "How would the Americans like it if a foreign government were allowed to rule a territory within the United States?" he asks. In effect, the U.S. Congress is responsible for establishing laws within the Zone and a military governor is empowered to enforce them. It has even occasionally happened that a Panamanian citizen has been arrested in the Zone, even though he did not live or work there, and deported to the United States.

One of the little publicized reasons why a U.S. Canal study commission has ruled out Colombia as a possible location for a second inter-oceanic canal is the Colombians' certain refusal to accept the United States' condition of a sovereignty clause. In fact, if the Panamanians had had any say in the matter, they never would have accepted the United States' claim to "perpetual sovereignty" when they declared independence from Colombia in 1903. As the Panamanians point out, the U.S. position might not be so uncompromising if more generals and Congressmen read some Panamanian history.

Actually, Theodore Roosevelt was less to blame for Panama's grievances than an egotistical Frenchman by the name of Philippe Bunau-Varilla, Ferdinand de Lesseps' chief engineer in the unsuccessful French scheme to dig a sea-level canal, or second Suez, across the Isthmus.



Some 22,000 men died, mostly from malaria and yellow fever, before de Lesseps returned to France, broken and sick, in 1889 to face a financial scandal which rocked the nation.

Undaunted, Bunau-Varilla began lobbying in the U.S. Congress for the purchase of the French company's assets and concessions. The United States had always preferred the idea of a canal through the Lake of Nicaragua, but Bunau-Varilla was able to swing the vote in favor of Panama by a small majority. In 1902 Roosevelt was authorized to buy out the company and make a treaty covering the Canal's construction and administration with Colombia, of which Panama was then part. Failing that, he was authorized to build a canal in Nicaragua.

Secretary of State John Hay negotiated and signed a treaty with the Colombian Government giving the United States administrative control, for a hundred years, of a strip of land 6 miles wide along the canal route in return for $10 million in gold plus an annual income of $250,000, starting nine years after the date of the treaty. At no time was there any question of Colombian sovereignty over the strip. The U.S. Senate ratified the treaty, but the Colombian Senate procrastinated in time-honored Latin fashion. An exasperated Roosevelt sent the Colombians several threatening telegrams, while the inhabitants of the Isthmus, angered at the possible loss of a golden opportunity, threatened revolution against the central government in Bogotá. The rebels saw no reason why Panama, which had been joined to Colombia by Simón Bolívar in a federation in 1821, should not declare independence and thereby get the $10 million destined for Colombia.

A Panamanian emissary, Manuel Amador, was sent to the United States to find out if it would back a revolution and provide funds to buy armed ships to fight the Colombian Navy. Amador soon met Bunau-Varilla who, gambling on Roosevelt's anger with the Colombians, assured him the United States would not stand by a fifty-seven-year-old treaty guaranteeing Colombian sovereignty over Panama. Bunau-Varilla also promised to lend $100,000 of his own money to the conspirators if the new government appointed him its minister to Washington. Obsessed with obtaining the personal honor of signing the treaty as Panama's representative, Bunau-Varilla was not motivated by money or politics but by a desire to prove that he,

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de Lesseps and France had been right to choose Panama for the Canal despite financial disaster.

Everything turned out as Bunau-Varilla had hoped. The U.S. cruiser *Nashville* arrived to prevent the landing of Colombian troops, the Panamanians paid off the Colombian forces already stationed there by borrowing from local banks on the promise of Bunau-Varilla's loan, and President Roosevelt recognized the de facto government on November 6, 1903, three days after the revolution began.

Within hours Bunau-Varilla presented himself as the new Panamanian Government's representative to Washington and told Secretary Hay he wanted to sign a treaty at once. Hay sent him a copy of the Colombian treaty, but Bunau-Varilla, hearing that a Panamanian delegation was on its way to negotiate the conditions, changed the Colombian draft by adding terms so favorable to the United States that Hay could not fail to accept them before the negotiators arrived. He did this without consulting the Panamanian Government and solely to achieve the distinction of signing the treaty himself. Though surprised at the unexpected generosity of the terms, Hay and his colleagues believed Bunau-Varilla was acting on instructions from Panama and so signed the treaty just hours before the Panamanian representatives arrived in Washington. The Frenchman's vanity cost Panama a great deal: instead of administrative control over the Canal Zone for 100 years, the United States was given sovereign rights in perpetuity.

Panamanian protests began almost immediately. Then as now, Panama's contention is that Clause II of the treaty, borrowed from the Colombian draft, contradicts Clause III, written by Bunau-Varilla, because Clause II gives the United States use, occupation and control of the Canal Zone *only* "for the construction, maintenance, sanitation and protection" of the Canal, whereas Clause III gives the United States all the rights, power and authority in the Zone "which it would possess if it were sovereign of the territory." Panama has always insisted the United States has no right to do anything in the Zone that is not necessary for the Canal's functioning, and strongly objects, for instance, to the establishment of an anti-guerrilla training camp for U.S. and Latin American military officers. The United States counters that it can do anything it likes in the Zone, and that includes giving classes on how to put down rebellions in other Latin American countries. As one army major explained, "We need this training base because we don't have proper jungle conditions in the United States."

Up to 1935 criticism from Panama could be eliminated by military force or the simpler expedient of removing Presidents. Not until the second Roosevelt was elected were any attempts made to improve U.S.-Panama relations. Under a treaty signed in 1936, the United States ended its guarantee of Panama's independence, relinquished its right to police Colon and Panama City, canceled its option to appropriate lands and waters at will, forswore the right to intervene in the country's internal affairs, and upped Panama's annual payment from Canal tolls to $430,000. The U.S. Senate agreed to ratify the treaty in 1939 after being reassured that a promise to consult Panama on any military action needed to preserve the Canal's safety really meant the United States would be free to shoot first and consult later. Nevertheless, something was better than nothing as far as Panama was concerned. "Franklin Roosevelt was the only President the United States has had in this century who made any effort to understand us," Foreign Minister Tack says.

When the Canal was inaugurated in 1914 at a cost of 4,000 lives and $398 million, the Americans who had worked on it and would administer it naturally regarded it as a symbol of national pride. However, over the decades pride has been confused with social attitudes, producing a colonial mentality in the Zonians that even today manifests itself in a thinly veiled contempt for the Spanish-speaking population. Neither they nor the Panamanians have outgrown the complexes produced by a gold and silver system under which immigrant workers and Panamanians were paid in silver while Americans were paid in gold, creating the infamous caste system of "Silver Men" and "Gold Men" which still survives in more sophisticated form to this day.

There are no physical barriers or customs agents at the entrance to the Canal Zone, but you know at once that you are about to enter another country when you approach the manicured green slopes leading to Balboa Heights, the Panama Canal Co.'s administration center. On the other side of Fourth of July Avenue, the hopeful name of the boulevard dividing the Zone from Panama City, lie the squalid, wooden tenements of Panama's poor. The contrast between this misery and the generously spaced bungalows and clipped lawns across the street is a sight which never ceases to impress visitors.

Within the airy bungalows it is easy to forget the heat and the poverty as your hostess passes around cold American beer and the latest General Foods snack fad purchased at the local commissary. Talk turns on the newest production of the Zone's local theatre and the unusual animals to be seen in the Zone's tropical zoo. But then somebody brings up last October, a subject which haunts the 40,000 American employees, military personnel and dependents living in the Zone.

October 11 is the anniversary of the Torrijos revolution. To enliven last year's celebrations, General Torrijos invited some 150,000 people to a plaza a stone's throw from Fourth of July Avenue where the crowds were given free machetes and food and told by Torrijos that he, personally, "would accompany you" in a march on the Zone. "Omar Torrijos is going to accompany you, and the 6,000 rifles of the National Guard are here to defend the integrity, the dignity of this country, gentlemen."

An almost audible sigh of relief could be heard from the Canal Zone side of the avenue when Torrijos informed the crowd that they were not going to march that day. However, he went on to warn that "when all hopes have failed to remove that colonial enclave from here, Omar Torrijos will come to this same plaza and say: 'Gentlemen, we failed, let's go forward, because Omar Torrijos is not a hero with someone else's blood.'"

No one in Panama doubts that Torrijos can seize the Canal whenever he likes. "What could the United States do if thousands walked into the Zone and took over the

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facilities?" wondered a Panamanian banker. "Supposing Torrijos told the Panamanians employed in the Zone (who constitute three-quarters of the labor force) to hold a sit-down strike. The United States couldn't shoot them."

Even if it could, it is doubtful that the shooting would last long because the well-equipped National Guard easily could outmaneuver U.S. troops, numbering slightly more than an army brigade, who are stationed in the Zone. Torrijos' officers already have demonstrated their ability to keep a secret, and U.S. intelligence is not exactly efficient, having been unprepared equally for the Torrijos coup and the 1964 riots. A National Guard campaign, based on secrecy and surprise, could successfully seize military and civilian objectives and close the Canal. Panamanians employed in the Zone certainly would follow Torrijos' orders to stay home. Torrijos, who already controls the country's radio, television and press, could put out any story to justify an invasion and Panamanians would believe it. History has conditioned them to assume the United States is capable of any excess in order to maintain its hold over the Canal.

The situation may never reach such extremes, but recent events hardly warrant any complacency. Panama already has placed Washington on notice that it may seek international mediation if the current treaty talks fail. In an unusual procedure intended to circumvent the Organization of American States, Panama presented its case for a new treaty at the U.N. General Assembly last fall. By tradition, Latin governments are supposed to take their grievances to the OAS first, but Panama fears the regional body may not give it a fair hearing, because of the United States' strong influence over the organization.

In the meantime, Cuba, that OAS outcast, has patched up earlier differences with the Torrijos regime and now is advocating Latin financial support to help Panama nationalize the Canal. "Cuba is ready to contribute the necessary funds to a common fund of the Latin American nations to aid Panama," announced a Havana broadcast. "Even more. If joint aid for Panama is not forthcoming, Cuba is ready to do it unilaterally."

Panama is expected to renew diplomatic relations with Cuba within the next few months in return for this support, thereby becoming the fourth Latin American nation to ignore OAS sanctions against Fidel Castro's government.

To make sure the gringos get the point, a Panamanian electoral court authorized, for the first time, the formation of two municipalities (*corregimientos*) in the Canal Zone for the election of a constitutional assembly on August 6. Panamanians living in the Canal Zone previously voted in adjoining districts outside the Zone, and the court's action was interpreted as a move to emphasize Panama's sovereignty over the Zone. In addition, the constitutional reform commission, which will submit its draft to the 500-man assembly, has recommended the abolition of a clause in the constitution of Panama providing that "the territory of the republic remains subject to jurisdictional limitations stipulated in public treaties," meaning the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty, of course.

Since the newly elected assembly will meet only twice in the next twelve years, it hardly represents a return to democratic government. However, it will give Torrijos' de facto regime a legal veneer and elect him President if he desires the title, which he may not. More important, the assembly will endorse tougher tactics in negotiations with the United States which Torrijos believes are necessary to break the current stalemate.

Torrijos need not worry about popular support for a get-tough policy. Public indignation, already at fever pitch, was aroused further by the capture in June of a fishing boat under U.S. registry, the *Serendipity*, which was loaded with weapons and ammunition apparently destined for Panama. The Panamanians suspect CIA involvement. Following the boat's seizure, Foreign Minister Tack gave a strongly worded speech, again demanding full sovereignty over the Canal Zone.

The *Serendipity* is a minor issue compared to the unpleasantness which may arise out of Panama's decision to take over the Electric Bond & Share Co. (EBASCO), a subsidiary of the U.S. lumber company, Boise Cascade. Finance Ministry spokesmen say the company was in arrears for $2.5 million in fuel bills, had refused to make any new investments and had failed to install a single new telephone in the past year—a serious situation in view of the fact that EBASCO is the sole supplier of electric power and telephone services in Panama. "They discontinued service to the country," said the finance minister, "and if we had not acted when we did, we would have been without all services by June 3 as the fuel companies had threatened to cut off supplies."

Conglomerate Boise Cascade inherited a number of public utilities in Latin America from EBASCO when it swallowed the latter and is known to want to discard those that do not make a good profit. In cutting costs in Panama, Boise Cascade executives knew that they were inviting nationalization. Indeed, EBASCO's directors had been expecting the government to take over the company since the beginning of the year. After the company was "intervened" on June 1, Boise Cascade negotiators promised to pay EBASCO's debts and undertake an expansion program on the condition that the government rescind a 1970 decree fixing profits at 8.75 per cent for the telephone service and 9.5 per cent for the electricity supply. The government insists that these are generous terms as only nineteen out of some 200 private companies supplying similar services in the United States make a higher profit. Boise Cascade's argument that EBASCO had been operating on an unconditional contract since 1917 did not impress the Panamanians who say that any agreement signed at the beginning of the century with the United States, whether for canals or public utilities, has to be out of date in 1972. After Boise Cascade refused to accept the limit on profits, the government decreed EBASCO's purchase at a price which must be negotiated by September 1. If no agreement is reached, the government will expropriate the company and unilaterally set a price.

Ironically, the people who stand to lose most from a U.S.-Panama confrontation are U.S. businessmen working in Panama, and they know it. The foreign banking community, which has flocked to Panama because of tax incentives, a freely convertible currency and the right to maintain Swiss-style numbered accounts, has opened no

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less than 146 branches since 1970 and intends to continue expanding if there are no political upsets. U.S. bankers, hardly the most liberal emissaries of American private enterprise, say they would like the United States to make more concessions on the sovereignty issue. "We all long for a bottle of U.S. beer or a certain brand of corn flakes once in awhile," said a New York banker. "But nowadays most of us who go abroad to work don't expect all the comforts identified with home. That's why we sometimes find it difficult to comprehend those people up in the Canal Zone who want to maintain a U.S. way of life in a foreign country. I don't understand why sovereignty should hang on the question of commissaries. We don't find it difficult to live under Panama's laws. Why should the Zonians?"

"That isn't true," retorted a Zonian housewife. "We know perfectly well this way of life has to end. We're always being accused of being the Neanderthals when in fact we have very little say in the matter. You know who's running this show? The Pentagon."

"The U.S. Embassy treats us like dirt," her husband added.

Embassy personnel, for their part, refuse to say anything about anything, even economic statistics which are well known in the business community. Visitors to the imposing edifices overlooking Panama City's waterfront are beginning to liken it to a mummy mausoleum, so frightened is anyone of opening his mouth.

"You'd be surprised at what goes on in there, though," said a wealthy Panamanian businessman and inveterate conspirator. "Not all of us are as fond of the general as you might think, although we are behind him on the Canal issue. We're not very happy about his plans to stay in power for twelve years, and that's what this constitutional reform is all about. Some of the embassy people agree with us and are urging us to form an opposition to get rid of him. But the left hand never knows what the right hand is doing in that damn embassy. You can be sure that just as soon as we started opposition tactics, the embassy would turn tail and claim it had nothing to do with us. We've learned from experience not to trust the Americans."

It is hard to see what the United States would gain by engineering Torrijos' downfall. Most of the younger officials under him would be if anything more radical in their approach to treaty negotiations. Organized civilian opposition is practically nonexistent, and even were a civilian installed in office, he could not afford to demand less from the United States than Torrijos has.

There are some who say money will settle the Canal issue, particularly since Torrijos' government has run up a $40 million budget deficit this year. Foreign Minister Tack denies this. "The Americans do not want to understand. The Canal issue is not a matter of money, of buying us off; it is a question of national pride and has nothing to do with internal politics."

"You know what amazes me," said an Englishman nodding toward the Canal Zone's whitewashed installations, "is how the U.S. Government thought it could keep this while supporting the Arabs at Suez. As you Americans are always saying, colonialism is out of date." □

HOUSES ON WHEELS

CLOGGING THE OPEN ROAD

AL MARTINEZ
Mr. Martinez is a staff writer on the Los Angeles Times.

Los Angeles

At the end of a long holiday weekend, traffic sometimes piles up on the slow grade leading through the Coyote Mountains east of San Diego. At the top of the grade, just before the freeway resumes and sends you flying toward the coast, you can look back down the long incline to a scene that is spectacular—and shocking.

The line of traffic is an endless snake. It winds down the slope, over and around the foothills, through the arid land of Indian reservations and out of sight into the hazy distance. But it isn't just the size of the traffic snake that gives pause. The composition is equally stunning. Viewing its many segments, one comes to realize with sobering abruptness that, somehow when we weren't looking, the Age of the Recreational Vehicle dawned on America.

Campers, vans, motor homes, house trailers, pickup truck shell covers and camping trailers—there are a million such vehicles in California alone, 3.5 million across the country, and the number is expected to double by 1980. Packaging mobility, economy and convenience, the recreational vehicle is today a $1 billion business, and booming. Starting rather slowly, the industry spurted ahead by 500 per cent in the 1960s, to produce 500,000 vehicles a year by 1970. Growth continues at a steady pace: 10 per cent in 1971, 13 per cent anticipated for 1972.

The growth has not gone unnoticed by those either directly or indirectly concerned with it. Recreational vehicles have come under the scrutiny of an uneasy army of environmentalists, safety experts and city-beautiful advocates, who suspect when there are that many of anything there's bound to be a problem. Conservationists are especially skeptical of the newest kind of recreational vehicle: the gadget-jammed motor homes that bring a kind of rolling opulence to the rim of the wilderness.

Their effect on the environment is admittedly unknown, but the more militant environmentalists fear the worst and generally resent the massive aluminized assault upon nature. Asked one agonized ecologist: "Are they trying to get away from it all or are they bringing it all with them?" A growing number of cities tend to view the even

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more conspicuous recreational vehicles with repugnance. By one estimate, there are in California alone sixty municipal statutes aimed at keeping the big rolling homes off the streets and, in a few cases, even out of sight on private property.

Aesthetics aside, all categories of "rec" vehicles have been the subject of at least three major safety studies, but these have failed to answer some vital questions concerning their stability. The most recent investigation is a two-year evaluation of campers and trailers, made by the Institute of Transportation and Traffic Engineering, at the University of California, Los Angeles. The study found the vehicles safe—with reservations.

Wind, for instance, is still an unknown factor in camper and trailer accidents. Even those state agencies responsible for erecting wind screens in mountain passes to protect the big vehicles against powerful gusts admit they don't know what the safety limits are—just that there are, indeed, limits. Alerts, issued by the Highway Patrol to warn owners of campers and trailers of dangerous wind conditions, are based on a combination of instinct and experience, not on scientific knowledge. The motor homes, ranging in size up to 28 feet and in cost to about $20,000 (higher, when customized) are too new on the market to have undergone extensive independent testing, but more tests are in the offing—one by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Some independent manufacturers, anticipating stringent federal standards, are conducting tests of their own.

But for all the unanswered questions about rec vehicles, and the often bitter criticism directed toward them, they are fiercely defended by the growing number of those who buy them. Mrs. Hildamae Voght of Los Angeles, founder and executive director of the 6,000-member California Outdoor Recreation League (CORL), is especially outspoken. She views municipal animosity toward them as shabby efforts by the cities to limit America's mobility and keep the spending dollar at home. She vows to fight that attitude at every level of legislation and then to the U.S. Supreme Court if necessary, claiming that laws restricting recreational vehicles are an infringement of civil liberties.

"I don't understand their feeling," Mrs. Voght adds angrily. "Recreational vehicles are not public nuisances, they aren't safety hazards and they aren't health hazards. The main objection seems to be that we're eyesores and that we create a litter problem. I say it's a damn lie."

Mrs. Voght maintains that rec vehicle owners are in the forefront of the move to beautify America. The proof, she says, is that CORL originated the annual Johnny Horizon countryside cleanup that brought together 36,000 volunteers in eighteen states to collect a mountain of litter. And, in replying to the charge that recreational vehicles might be polluting the woods, Mrs. Voght touches upon an enigma of the environmental movement: "We believe in the preservation of our natural resources, but we also believe in the preservation of our human resources. And isn't the use of our natural resources critical to the existence and happiness of our human resources?"

Support for Mrs. Voght's position comes, not unexpectedly, from R. E. Rasmus, Western director for the Recreational Vehicle Institute: "It's a time to explore the nation, and rec vehicles are making that possible for young people with families. They can tour America without the high cost of motel and restaurant bills. Recreational vehicles are a way to be free—free to see the mountains and the deserts and the oceans, free to go where we want to go. That's what it's all about."

Even to the militant environmentalist, that's a powerful argument, and I can vouch for its credibility. Twice now within a five-year period, my family has rented truck-camper combinations for vacation travel. The first was a month-long trip through Mexico; the second, last fall, a two-month-plus tour of America from coast to coast. The five of us took a 15,000-mile trip through thirty states for about $6,000. We could not have taken it without a camper; meal and motel costs would have severely curtailed our adventure.

And freedom *is* an essential element of the rec vehicle—the freedom to swing off the main roads and stop by a lake in the Adirondacks or on a cliff along the Oregon coast or on a hill overlooking a green Kentucky valley. Neither the speed of a jet nor the tiresome rigidity of a bus can match that.

There was one terrifying moment in the odyssey, and it started me exploring the safety features of recreational vehicles. Just west of Oklahoma City on a drizzly day I suddenly lost control of the pickup. A gust of wind buffeted the camper and we were, quite literally, floating. I maneuvered as best I could into a ditch separating us

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from the oncoming traffic, and the rig ended up on its side. My alternative was a 60-foot drop on the other side of the road.

No one was hurt and, because the truck had slowed considerably before it flopped over, there was surprisingly little damage. Describing the incident later to a UCLA safety expert, I was told we were probably hydroplaning: riding off the highway on a sheet of water, and lifted by the wind driving under the cab-over portion of the camper. The expert admitted that his organization knows little of this effect on recreational vehicles, but he hopes that future studies will reveal more of the dangers involved. Systems Technology, Inc. of Southern California, a space-age industry, may use its giant wind tunnel facilities in a long-range study of the problem.

Unknown hazards notwithstanding, the California Highway Patrol says that truck-campers comprise 3 per cent of the vehicles on the state's highways at any given time, but were involved in less than 0.5 per cent of California's death and injury accidents in a seven-month study period.

It obviously is not concern over human safety that is causing environmentalists to bristle at the increasing number of recreational vehicles filling, and occasionally clogging, the open road. They're edgy about the intrusion of the vehicles on nature.

"Not that we're panicked exactly," says Mike McCloskey, executive director of the Sierra Club. "We're just watching closely. It isn't clear yet what effect these big recreational vehicles will have on the outdoors, but it does not bode well for the woods. The larger vehicles at least have to stay on paved roads and can't go charging through the forests, that is true. But, one wonders, what comes next? We are wary."

Similar sentiments were expressed for Friends of the Earth by its legislative representative, Louise Dunlap. The organization would favor a system that would prevent all private vehicles from entering parks (public transport, possibly monorails, would bring visitors in from parking areas). "In themselves," says Miss Dunlap tactfully, "recreational vehicles are probably not bad. But the fact that they are more extensively invading areas once wild or semi-wild makes them bad."

The National Audubon Society, in a statement to the California legislature, asks: "Is it not possible to construct parks for these vehicles in areas where noise is not a problem and few natural qualities would be sacrificed?"

Such parks, for the most part private, do exist. One publication lists 10,000 of them across the nation, from large chain operations to independents. Their price range is from $1.50 to $8 a night. However, these centers too often lack the scenic beauty that is the object of the recreational trip in the first place. They are strictly parks of convenience, places to hook up overnight.

The Recreational Vehicle Institute admits that there aren't nearly enough such sites and is encouraging more private campgrounds. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation predicts that the demand for public camps will be 80 per cent higher in 1980 than it was in 1965. The U.S. Forest Service estimates that about half of its campground visitors now come in recreational vehicles.

Largest of the motor home producers is Winnebago Industries, which accounts for about 40 per cent of those on the road today. Nine thousand Winnebagos were sold last year, and the company expects to double that volume this year. The category covers a wide assortment, ranging from lightly furnished 18-footers to 28-foot, $20,000 units equipped with stereo, air conditioning, forced air furnaces, television, water purifiers, electrical power plants, private bedrooms and enough other homey touches to gladden the hearts of those who can afford them.

Their existence angers Michael Nadel, secretary of the National Wilderness Society, who doesn't believe that motor homes or large campers have any place at all in America's parks. "The recreation method should be in keeping with the spirit of the park, and motor homes are not in keeping with that spirit. They are visual blots and they offend me."

Visual blots, status symbols, freedom wagons, polluters, home substitutes, low-cost vacations, nightmares in the summer dream, recreational vehicles are here to stay, and so is the growing debate surrounding their movement on the nation's highways. □

LETTERS *(Continued from page 98)*

Petroleum Encyclopedia of 1972, published recently by the same people who publish the *Oil & Gas Journal*. In this standard reference work for the industry it says, "The term 'energy crisis' is probably too harsh an appraisal of what America faces today. There is no evidence yet of any outright shortage pending anywhere." Unfortunately, industry does not say this when it addresses the public. . . .

Furthermore, Mr. Lapp develops estimated supplies that do not come even close to agreeing with the National Petroleum Council's estimates. He says 120 billion barrels of oil; the NPC says 346 billion barrels. He says 720 trillion cubic feet of gas; the NPC says 1,195 Tcf. These NPC figures are minimums. More to the point, the NPC says in its July 1970 report, "Obviously there is no way of knowing the amount of undiscovered petroleum. Even the amount in the fields already discovered is quite imperfectly known. . . ."

If I am wrong about Germany's and Japan's use of MHD I welcome the correction; my information came from the industry engineers. MHD is a highly efficient system and the Electrical Research Council estimates we could have commercially available MHD plants in this country by the late 1980s. . . . But we won't even have butterflies if our "cocoons," as Mr. Lapp calls them, continue to be shamefully underfinanced and underresearched by both government and industry. That's my point, which for some reason he ignores.

Robert Sherrill

hear, hear

Berkeley, Calif.

DEAR SIRS: One key fact to keep in mind this election year is that McGovern is less a radical than a cautious upbuilder of the weaker sections of society, like the Swedish Social Democrats.

The other is Nixon's clear dishonesty on the major issues.

Tertius Chandler

correction

The editors regret that the concluding section of *La Torture dans la République*, by Pierre Vidal-Naquet, which appeared in our issue of June 12, was prefaced by an inaccurate editorial note. The translator reminds us that the current edition, the first to appear in France, is a completely revised and expanded version of the book published in English by Penguin in 1962.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

The Dostoevsky of Russian Poetry

PARADOX IN THE RELIGIOUS POETRY OF ZINAIDA GIPPIUS. *By Olga Matich. Wilhelm Fink Verlag (Munich). 127 pp. DM 28. (Available through Russian Language Specialties, Chicago, Ill. and Szwede Slavic Books, Palo Alto, Calif. Paper $9.)*

ZINAIDA HIPPIUS: An Intellectual Profile. *By Temira Pachmuss. Southern Illinois University Press. 491 pp. $12.50.*

SIMON KARLINSKY
Mr. Karlinsky is professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of California, Berkeley, and editor and annotator of Letters of Anton Chekhov, *to be published next year by Harper & Row.*

Page 14 of Temira Pachmuss' book shows a photograph of an exquisitely flowerlike young girl in a frilly white frock; on page 5, there is a reproduction of a Leon Bakst watercolor that depicts a sneering young dandy in stylized male attire of the Napoleonic era. Both pictures are portraits of Zinaida Gippius (her German ancestors spelled the name Hippius before they emigrated to Russia in the 16th century), Russia's most profound religious poet, a guiding spirit of the Russian Symbolist movement, one of the main initiators of the religious revival among the liberal intelligentsia of the turn of the century and a spectacular early practitioner of psychological unisex, who rejected the traditional male/female roles as early as the 1890s. Unpublishable and virtually unknown in the Soviet Union, she is the subject of two highly informative studies that have appeared recently in the West.

In 1889, at the age of 20, Gippius was married to the rising novelist and critic Dimitry Merezhkovsky. They lived together for the rest of their lives in a fraternal, never-consummated marriage which was an intellectual partnership more than anything else. Although it was Merezhkovsky who eventually attained international fame with his book on Tolstoy and Dostoevsky and with his historical novels (one of them, *The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci,* was recently shown to have served Sigmund Freud as a primary source for his psychoanalysis of Leonardo), all their friends agree that Gippius supplied Merezhkovsky with the stimuli and ideas for everything he wrote. And indeed, in retrospect, there can be no doubt that she was by far the more significant and influential writer of the two. The poems she published in 1893 and 1894 spelled the beginnings of modern Russian poetry. In them she expanded the boundaries of 19th-century meters and popularized the accentual verse and assonance rhymes that were later developed and perfected by Alexander Blok, Anna Akhmatova and Osip Mandelstam. At a time when Russian criticism was dominated by utilitarian-minded Positivists who tolerated poetry only if it preached a simplistic moral or contained social criticism, Gippius was one of the first to take up the basic themes of Symbolism (which were to remain central to all her subsequent writings): man's need for religious faith, the problem of achieving freedom in a necessity-bound world, the ambiguities of sexual roles in any love relationship and the inevitability of death as an ever present factor in our lives. Andrew Field was not exaggerating when he wrote that the poetry of Gippius "can be nothing less than what Dostoevsky himself would have written had he been a poet." In a very real sense, the position of Gippius in Russian poetry is indeed almost exactly analogous to that of Dostoevsky in the Russian novel. And of course, without her pioneering example neither Blok nor Mayakovsky would have been what they later became.

In most of her poems Gippius spoke of herself in the masculine gender (much more fully expressed in Russian grammar than in English). In her love lyrics, this masculine persona addresses now a female, now a male lover. This ambivalence was also present in her personal life. Her intellectual partnership with Merezhkovsky remained the most important of her relationships, but it left Gippius unsatisfied emotionally. A few incipient affairs with young poets and politicians in the late 1890s all ran aground on her inability and unwillingness to assume the traditional female role. She also had some close emotional involvements with other women and even addressed love lyrics to a few, but these attachments all seem to have been of secondary importance. Believing herself to be a woman physically but a man spiritually and emotionally, Gippius finally came to the conclusion that her ideal soul mate had to be a male homosexual who would be interested in neither a dominant masculine nor a submissive feminine stance. Her choice fell upon Dimitry Filosofov, the spectacularly handsome son of the Russian feminist leader Anna Filosofova. Filosofov was a literary critic, and, at the time, the lover of his cousin Sergei Diaghilev, with whom he edited the pathbreaking journal *The World of Art.* With Merezhkovsky's willing assistance, Gippius resolutely set out to break up the relationship between Filosofov and Diaghilev, using as her main lever Filosofov's religious and mystical inclinations and interests which Diaghilev was not able to share. The tug of war between Gippius and Diaghilev over the young critic's affections which developed over a period of several years and which finally culminated in the victory of Gippius in 1905 had an effect on the entire future of Russian culture that is not generally realized and that had ramifications going far beyond this apparently private emotional tangle. In order to keep Filosofov more securely within their orbit, Gippius and Merezhkovsky initiated the famous encounters between Russian intellectuals and writers on the one hand and the Orthodox clergy on the other at the Religious-Philosophical Society. Russian intellectuals and Russian clergymen had been almost totally estranged since some time in the 1860s and the resulting rapprochement led to the religious-cultural renascence that helped assert the reputations of such religious philosophers as Nikolai Berdyaev and Lev Shestov, supplied the essential religious strains in the poetry of the early Blok and the late Pasternak, and had an influence that can still be felt in such major works of Soviet literature as Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita,* Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* and Solzhenitsyn's *August 1914.* For his part, Sergei Diaghilev was so crushed by the defection of his lover that he lost all interest in editing the remarkable journal the two of them had founded and decided to shift the center of his interest from painting and literature (with which he had been principally involved in the preceding ten years) to music and ballet. The impact of the ensuing series of concerts and ballet performances which Diaghilev took to Paris (he organized them partly in order to be away from St. Petersburg and to avoid

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seeing Gippius or Filosofov) on music, ballet and the visual arts, both in Russia and throughout the world, is too well known to require documentation.

From 1905 until 1920, the group that was known in Russian literary circles as "the Merezhkovskys" consisted of the triumvirate of Gippius, Merezhkovsky and Filosofov. Like many Russian intellectuals of the time, all three were strongly radicalized by the failure of the abortive revolution of 1905. They collaborated on the anti-monarchist tract, *The Tsar and the Revolution,* which was banned in Russia but was published in France and Germany. They also jointly wrote a remarkable play, *Poppy Blossoms* (*Makov tsvet*; in her book, Temira Pachmuss translated this title as *The Red Poppy*, apparently confusing it with Glière's ballet of that name), a picture of the generational conflict occasioned by the 1905 revolution and aggravated by the polarization of opinion over the desirability and ethics of the Russo-Japanese War. Reading *Poppy Blossoms* today, one experiences an almost hallucinatory sense of *déjà vu*: if Vietnam is substituted for Russia's ill-advised attack on Japan, the problems of Russian intellectuals in 1905 as depicted in the play become uncannily similar to those of today's Americans. Even more recognizably, Gippius' play *The Green Ring* (it is available in English and would make a worthwhile project for some university theatre group) depicted the revolt of a group of articulate teen-agers against the mercenary and hypocritical values of their parents and elders. In a brilliant production by Vsevolod Meyerhold, *The Green Ring* was the major event of the 1916 theatrical season; it remains to this day one of the finest genuinely revolutionary and genuinely poetic plays in the Russian language.

The objections of Zinaida Gippius to the Tsarist autocracy were that it perpetuated the artificial division of people into social classes and, by supporting an official church and by persecuting religious dissenters and minorities, prevented the individual from seeking his or her own path to God. She saw the aim of the Russian revolutionary movement (which she came to revere) in the establishment of total universal freedom and equality in all aspects of social life; she also believed that the revolution would give people a freedom of choice in their pursuit of religious experience and sexual fulfillment. Lenin's version of the revolution, with its insistence on the primacy of class structure, restriction of sexuality to its most bourgeois forms and, above all, its total ban on all spiritual life and religious growth was for Gippius worse than oppression or betrayal of revolutionary ideals: it was sacrilege and deicide. No one among the Russian *émigrés* denounced the Soviet regime with greater fury and virulence than she; but the relentless bitterness and hatred of her anti-Bolshevik diatribes and poems poison her message and render her jeremiads unpalatable even for those who might sympathize with her reasons.

The loss of Filosofov, who in 1920 left the Merezhkovskys to join a group of revolutionary anarchists based in Poland was as shattering a blow to Gippius as the October Revolution. In emigration, Gippius produced two volumes of literary memoirs, some critical articles and a slim book of verse in her best metaphysical manner. Otherwise, the outside world knew her during those years as the wife of the noted writer Merezhkovsky. She outlived him by four years and died in 1945 in Paris, after completing her literary biography of Merezhkovsky.

Gippius became an Orwellian unperson in the Soviet Union after about 1925 and for several decades the position of literary historians there was that she had simply never existed. Her name began to reappear in Soviet encyclopedias and references after the 1960s, but she is mentioned only to be denounced as a decadent and a benighted reactionary who dared disagree with Lenin and Gorky. Because of her historical and artistic importance, it was inevitable that Gippius would be rediscovered by foreign scholars. The book by Olga Matich, originally a UCLA doctoral thesis, was published in Germany (but in English) by a Munich publishing house that specializes in important Russian writers and works which are banned in the Soviet Union for nonliterary reasons. Ostensibly a study of a particular aspect of Gippius' poetry, the book is actually a balanced and thoroughly objective outline of this poet's system of thought. The introductory chapter should lay to rest the many spurious legends and invidious myths that are still to be found about Zinaida Gippius in many non-Russian sources. The remainder of the book examines, under the suggestive chapter headings, "God," "Love," "Despair," "Devil" and "Death," the unique personal cosmogony and the powerful religious vision embodied in this astounding woman's poetry. Were it not for the fact that the poetry itself is quoted in the original Russian and without translation, this book could be recommended as the most thorough and intelligent introduction to the thought and poetry of Zinaida Gippius ever written.

The "Intellectual Profile" by Temira Pachmuss is broader in scope and more ambitious than Professor Matich's study. Based on an enormous amount of research and drawing on a large body of unpublished manuscripts and documents, the volume builds up an impressive case for the importance of the entire Gippius phenomenon for the development of Russian poetry and culture as they exist today. All serious students of Russian literature, who are already indebted to Professor Pachmuss for her recent publications in France and Germany of the diaries of Zinaida Gippius, of her collected poetry and of her memoirs (the latter two through the good offices of the same German publisher that brought out Olga Matich's book), should be grateful for the thorough documentation and for the great deal of new information on the life and writings of Gippius that the book contains. If the portrait of Zinaida Gippius that ultimately emerges is not entirely satisfactory, it is because the book is handicapped by the author's attitude of excessive adulation toward her subject, paradoxically combined with a lack of genuine affinity for Gippius' views and interests. The sexual ambivalence, so very important in both the poet's life and her poetry, is either lifted to a metaphysical level or coyly swept under the carpet (even the nature of Gippius' attachment to Filosofov, discussed in print by a number of previous commentators, is never made explicit in the book). The interpenetration of the sexual urge and the quest for God, so very basic to the thought of both Gippius and Merezhkovsky, is likewise treated with skittish prudery. The poet's plays, so significant and relevant for today's readers, are dismissed by Professor Pachmuss in a few curt paragraphs and instead she concentrates her biggest guns on asserting the reputation of Zinaida Gippius as a literary critic.

Now, both before and after the revolution, Gippius indeed published a great deal of criticism under the pen name of Anton Krainy ("Anton the Extreme"). As a critic she was unbelievably narrow-minded and almost totally blind to literary quality as such. She expected her own kind of metaphysical subtlety from all other writers and she was simply not interested in any writing that did not in one way or another descend from the Dostoevskian tradition. This *parti pris* led her to condemn as frivolous and insignificant prose writers of the caliber of Maxim Gorky, Anton Chekhov (who for Gippius was a provincial dullard able to describe only the animal side of human existence), and Vladimir Nabokov ("a writer who has absolutely nothing to say"), and to treat with contempt almost all the important Russian post-Symbolist poets, including such figures as Maya-

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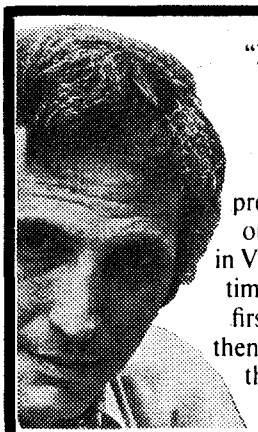
kovsky, Esenin, Pasternak, Anna Akhmatova and Marina Tsvetaeva. Instead of trying to explain why the very qualities that made Gippius such an original thinker and poet also made her blind as a critic, Temira Pachmuss hastens to agree with all of her subject's foibles and prejudices, quoting with approval such patent absurdities as the assertion that Chekhov held all women in contempt (as supposedly proven by the character of Natasha in *Three Sisters*). "Hippius deserves recognition as an original and perceptive critic, whose judgment in literary matters has stood the test of time," Professor Pachmuss writes at the end of her detailed chapter on the poet's criticism, but everything she herself cites in the preceding 80 pages belies this sanguine evaluation.

"The religious thought which was typical of the Russian intelligentsia at the turn of the century has no validity today," writes Professor Pachmuss at the beginning of her book, leaving one wondering where she has been for the past ten years and why she bothered to write a book on Zinaida Gippius in the first place. For anyone who is at all aware of the recent trends in modern sensibility in the Western countries, Temira Pachmuss' own fact-filled book and Olga Matich's perceptive study should offer ample proof that the religious thought of Zinaida Gippius and of her contemporaries is remarkably valid and fascinating today and that this poet's tortuous search for freedom from sexual stereotypes can be understood far better now than it was in earlier decades. The English translations of Gippius' poems offered in Professor Pachmuss' book are regrettably pedestrian in quality and are frequently inexact. Should some talented translator come up with better renditions as a result of these two new books on Gippius, there would very likely be an eager and receptive audience in the West for the poems, plays, diaries and memoirs of this unfairly and undeservedly forgotten writer who changed the course of poetry in her own country and who foreshadowed so many of our present-day insights and attitudes. □



"For over seven years, like many other Americans, I have been preoccupied with our involvement in Vietnam. In that time I have seen it first as a problem; then as a stalemate; then as a crime."

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PAPERS ON THE WAR

SIMON AND SCHUSTER

A Baobab Tree in Gabon

THE EMERGENCE OF AFRICAN FICTION. *By Charles R. Larson. Indiana University Press. 305 pp. $10. Paper $3.50.*

THE TRIAL OF CHRISTOPHER OKIGBO. *By Ali A. Mazrui. The Third Press. 145 pp. $5.95.*

THE POLYGAMIST. *By Ndabaningi Sithole. The Third Press. 178 pp. $6.95.*

PETER DREYER

Mr. Dreyer is a South African writer, the author of a novel, A Beast in View, *and an editor of* Omphalos, *a quarterly review published in Athens and devoted to Mediterranean writings and ideas.*

"History is jolted along with great breaches of law and order," exulted the late William Bolitho; Ms. Clio was once also from time to time chivvied by writers of fiction who, because they listened to voices—as I think it was Faulkner said—and felt themselves to be somehow in touch with the infinite, took the liberty of interpreting the ways of man to man, with suggestions. It is today hard to credit the influence—mostly I should say for the good—that novelists used to have. For although Mr. Bellow and a few others still bear witness in the West, that priesthood has otherwise largely succumbed to pernicious academia. To twist Jerome Rothenberg's unhappy phrase, novelists (like poets) have become mere *technicians* of the sacred.

Their absorption in the minutiae of style may impress, their fine sense of form—a product of generations of careful instruction—is certainly a wonder; but we cannot help doubting whether they are any more really in touch with the oracles in whose names their shrines are erected.

This is not however the case in Africa. On that continent there has always been less stress on the accurate identification and naming of the deity, than concern with blessing, function and forecast. When in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*, the chief priest Ezeulu refuses to announce the New Yam Festival on a technicality, his parishioners simply transfer their allegiance to the Christian god, and Ulu loses his power forthwith. The yams are saved. The mystery must go on.

It may be that the African writer preserves his innocent vitality because of the absence of a critical apparatus aimed at explaining him to himself. If so, Charles R. Larson's *The Emergence of African Fiction* is a hard-working attempt to fill that gap. Larson guides us through selected areas in the African fiction of the past quarter-century with admirable thoroughness. All the way from the simplicities of the Onitsha Market school and Speedy Eric's *Mabel the Sweet Honey (That Poured Away)*:

> She was just fourteen and half years. But she was real sweet honey. The mere looking at her would hold up the flow of your blood for sixty seconds . . . she would blink and make such soft eyes that your temperature would speed up to hundred degrees farenhiet. *(sic).*

to the subtleties of Ayi Kwei Armah's neo-Joycean *Fragments* and the Guinean Camara Laye's *Le Regard du roi.* Whereupon he concludes:

> As in the past, only one thing is certain: there will never be one typical form for African fiction. Ultimately, as with African life itself, there will be changing patterns.

The pity is that we cannot afford to dismiss this insight as merely trite; the way things are, Larson is probably quite right to insist on it. He is certainly better informed than we are about a whole slew of novels that sound more vigorous than most of what has been produced in the Anglophone mid-Atlantic in recent years. We can only hope that Western readers will take note of his comments, and that African writers will studiously ignore them. If Speedy Eric survived the flattening of Onitsha Market by Nigerian bombers, he deserves protection against

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comparisons with Richardson and tne Abbé Prévost. Enough is enough!

Ali A. Mazrui is described as professor and head of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. After a number of books on political subjects he has produced a novel, *The Trial of Christopher Okigbo.* The unseen protagonist, an Ibo poet, was killed fighting for Biafra during the late civil war. The book is an account of his trial in the afterlife on the charge of "putting society before art in his scale of values." He is defended by a Kenyan Muslim called Hamisi and prosecuted by a Ghanian, Apolo-Gyamfi, who are themselves being tested in this fashion on their own accounts.

It is doubtful whether any English novelist since Wells would have attempted such a subject, and certainly the book is full of pomposities and nonsense. Much play is made of statements such as "Death is an exercise in Pan-Africanism!" On the evidence here adduced Okigbo's own verse seems to have been pretty bad, so calling up the spirit of Byron (as Hamisi does) to testify in his defense, is only appropriate. There is probably a certain affinity between the author of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and the Nigerian poet:

the only way to go
through the marble archway
to the catatonic pingpong
of the evanescent halo. . . .

Notwithstanding all this, I would rather read a book like *The Trial of Christopher Okigbo* than any amount of current Western fiction. The author is obviously a man who is concerned with moral issues in a way that few European or American authors are any more, and who expects, moreover, to have an influence.

George Orwell, reviewing *No Orchids for Miss Blandish*, which he described as a "cesspool," was compelled to admit that it was also "a brilliant piece of writing, with hardly a wasted word or a jarring note anywhere." The reverse is true in much African writing, which may be clumsy, gauche and even idiotic, but is hardly morally equivocal. That is what gives these books their vitality.

As for Mr. Mazrui, who is an associate editor of Rajat Neogy's *Transition*—the only critical magazine in Africa worth a damn to my knowledge—he deserves the punishment accorded his own advocate Hamisi for miscalculation: sentence, to haunt a lonely baobab tree in Gabon and frighten little children straying near. After all, he is a professor! These people must learn to be more careful. However, having been reasonably entertained by him, I would also accord him Hamisi's consolation: the traditional houri in residence.

Ndabaningi Sithole is president of the banned Zimbabwe African National Union, and his novel *The Polygamist* was apparently written in a Rhodesian prison, where he is serving a six-year sentence on charges of conspiracy. It is a gentle book, dealing with the modernization of husband-of-seven Menzi Dube under the influence of his son, Ndanda, who has returned a teacher after a long absence from home. Ndanda is in love with a Nguni girl, Jessie Khumalo, who bears the name of the Ndebele kings Mzilikazi and Lobengula, and his efforts to bring his old dad up to date are largely aimed at impressing her family. He cannot bear the idea of Dube meeting them in traditional monkey-skin kilt, so by dint of making him a present of a bicycle—which he can hardly ride in his kilt—he gets the old man to adopt European-style shorts. From shorts and bicycle it is only a step to buying a truck.

Mr. Sithole seems to regard progress as a pretty good thing, if tempered with a modicum of respect for Ndebele customs. That makes him distinctly old-fashioned too. □

Three Poems by Ameen Alwan

I TRANSLATE RAIN
(After *"Es fabuloso mi trabajo"* by Carlos Castro Saavedra)

Rivers
dictate to me.

I follow
boats

gathering
the tracks

they leave
in waves.

I describe
the countryside

oxen hoard
in their wet eyes.

I grant myself
vacations

stretching out
on grass

(stubble
of the dead)

to dream
I don't exist:

I'm air
in air.

The wings

of birds
inhabit me.

I ask
the dead

if winding sheets
help.

I note
their answers

on the leaves
of almond trees.

I keep
all this

below my skin

within my blood

until
it ripens
and fills me

with sun.

MAILBOX

loaf of bread
stuffed

not with raisins
but words

from you

THE END OF AUGUST

birds
have hollowed

the fig

which hangs
by its stem

like a ripe
nest

for the afternoon
light

Hanging Crepe

THE DEATH OF THE ARMY: A Pre-Mortem. *By Lt. Col. Edward L. King. Saturday Review Press. 232 pp. $6.95.*

LUCIAN K. TRUSCOTT III
Mr. Truscott, a retired Army colonel, commanded an infantry company in the Korean War and an infantry battalion in Vietnam. He served on the Army staff in the Pentagon and on two Joint staffs. At present, in collaboration with Josiah Bunting, he is working on a book dealing with the problem of careerism in the military.

This is a sad book. Sad because it had to be written; because of its errors and misleading statements; and because much of what King says about the Army is true. Having previously read an extract in *The Army Times,* I had hoped that the book would be a scholarly and objective appraisal of what has gone wrong with the Army over the past few years. It is not that at all. Rather, it is a listing of one man's personal gripes, a chronologically erratic tracing of every

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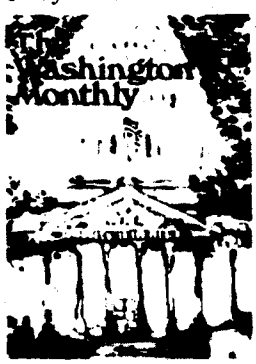

Richard Rovere says it's "the best thing of its kind in American life today." Nicholas von Hoffman says "it does its specialty–federal government and politics–better than any other magazine around." I. F. Stone says it's "outstanding. . . responsible . . . doesn't go in for half-assed hysterics." (Richard Nixon hasn't actually commented, but Time says it's "must reading at the White House," and that's good enough for us.)

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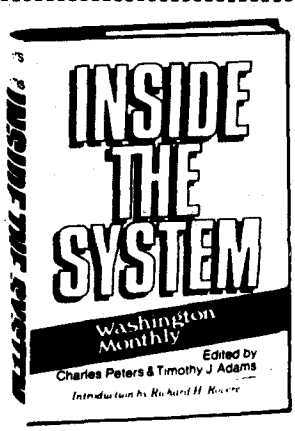

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baneful incident in his twenty-plus years of service.

In the first quarter of the book King tells a war story—of Korean War vintage—about the beginning of his disillusionment with the Army, recounts his almost endless difficulties in getting the Army to accept his retirement some eighteen years later, and intersperses his thoughts on the futility of the war in Vietnam. Thereafter, he attempts to determine "What Has Happened to the Army," and concludes that the Army leadership created a three-part (advisory, counter-insurgency, limited-war) "doctrine that required a mission" and "deluded two Presidents and brought the nation and the Army to the brink of ruin." He discusses the problems of racism, the military caste system, military justice and, in great detail, West Point(ers) and the so-called WPPA (West Point Protective Association). His analyses of poor training, poor organization, a poor military school system, a poor promotion system—in fact, the poor Army—fill another chapter or two of the book.

In a "Blueprint for Reform" he offers twenty-two reforms he believes to be essential. These range from guaranteeing First Amendment rights to soldiers, through revision of promotion policies and of rating systems (by means of which individuals are selected for promotion), to such matters as professional education and deployment of units overseas. Finally, in his "Look to the Future" King examines the possibility of more counterinsurgency and more foreign wars, and paints a chilling and highly improbable picture of an Army—not Armed Services but *Army*—take-over of the country: "All effective power would be in the hands of the Army. It would rest there with the willing support of the mass of the American people, who would have given up many of their freedoms and chosen military rule as an exemplification of law and order and return to stability."

The most disturbing thing about the book is that 232 pages is a grossly inadequate space in which to examine all of the ills of the United States Army and to prescribe either a panacea or a program of preventive medicine. It is not fair to the Army, the country or the reader for King to examine how we got into Vietnam in the space of pages 67 through 74; or the strategy of NATO from pages 136 to 150. These are the two most glaring examples of the book's basic superficiality. There are others. King states, for example, that "A U.S. Army officer is not expected to take exception to any opinion expressed by an Army general"—as if this doctrine appeared somewhere in Army Regulations or at least was an unwritten law which all must follow. In the Army, just as in any other large, complex organization, decision makers want facts upon which to base their decisions. It is the duty of the subordinate to furnish the superior with these facts. It is just as much his duty to disagree, even argue with his superior—to the point of decision. In my experience most general officers are more likely to be upset by lack of disagreement. In any case, for King to imply that no officer can take exception to any general's opinion is misleading.

This kind of sweeping statement on King's part is often enough the result of plain misapprehension. He writes: "The Army even changed the democratic olive-drab uniform that it had worn through two wars . . . and adopted a gaudy high-crowned Wehrmacht style [cap]. . . . These changes were part of the image-building that the Army organization men were copying from Madison Avenue." He's wrong, of course. The uniform was changed mainly because ex-GIs and ex-soldiers of other countries the world over (e.g., in Korea, the Philippines, Europe) were wearing remnants of our old uniform. And the new green uniform, with only a band of black braid on each sleeve and trouser leg to distinguish officers from enlisted men, is far more "democratic" than the old officer "pinks and greens" which set officers completely apart from enlisted men.

In discussing pay King says: "The bulk of the pay raises have been in base pay, which has gone to those who have sufficient rank to warrant government quarters." This is right, as far as it goes, but somewhat misleading without a comparison of pay raises to the various ranks over the years. For example, the June 14th edition of the *Army Times* indicates that the lowest grade EM has received a 325.8 per cent increase in pay over a ten-year period (including the next proposed raise), as compared to 130.5 per cent for the highest ranking sergeant. The second lieutenant, meanwhile, has received a 204.5 per cent increase, compared to the full general's 76.5 per cent raise. These figures weren't available to King, but similar figures were. King could have lent more validity to his presentation by furnishing more facts and letting the reader decide.

He makes the same error of omission in his continuous argument against West Point and West Pointers. He states, for example, that in 1969 West Point had furnished some 366 of the 520 generals on active duty (about 70 per cent), including fourteen of the sixteen four-star generals. But he does not go back into the period of the 1930s and early 1940s when at least the most senior of these individuals were commissioned, to determine what percentage of the officers commissioned at that time were other

NIGHT IN ORANGE COUNTY

The beautiful shotguns
arrived while we were sleeping.
The moving men
swung open our screen
doors and made the delivery.

Grandpa held his head
up when the crates were dropped.
Then he heard his last curls falling
out, down to the pillow,
and followed
his hair back into the trance.

Shotguns:
the triggers
are made of sleep,
both barrels are bedrooms
forgotten in childhood.

In the morning
we ran through the vineyard
shaking ammunition from the branches.

John Eskow

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—Michael G. Michaelson, *N. Y. Times Book Review*

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than West Pointers. Being a West Pointer myself, and the son of a four-star general, *not* a West Pointer, I know that a WPPA of sorts does exist. The most recent promotion list from colonel to brigadier general, published in the June 21st edition of the *Army Times*, shows that about 50 per cent of the colonels selected were West Pointers. This may be still too high, but it is also something of an improvement over the 70 per cent figure that King cites. The significant thing about this recent list is that five of the colonels selected for promotion were black, and of the thirteen general officers sitting on the board, five were West Pointers, eight non-West Pointers, and one of them, a major general, was black. These figures weren't available to King either, but again, similar figures were. If nothing else they may indicate that the Army has recognized some of the faults King points out and is making some effort to correct them.

The Army *has* been ill at times. It still is. But it has not been on "the brink of ruin" nor are its problems "destroying" it. Indeed, it is still healthy enough to benefit immeasurably by reasoned, objective, logical criticism. A polemic is not the pill it needs. Unfortunately, this book is that, and can do little but exacerbate the illness. □

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CHINA

AN INTRODUCTION

Lucian W. Pye

with the collaboration of Mary W. Pye

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Little, Brown

There Goes the Neighborhood

IMAGINATIVE QUALITIES OF ACTUAL THINGS. *By Gilbert Sorrentino. Pantheon Books. 243 pp. $6.95.*

GREGORY RABASSA

Mr. Rabassa teaches Brazilian literature and comparative literature at Queens College, The City University of New York, and is the translator of several Latin American novels.

One summer's afternoon in the 1950s I was sitting in Bud Newbro's jewelry store on West 4th Street when a weary black man passed the open door and uttered an undirected "Shit." Bud was quick with his comment: "There goes the *Zeitgeist*." That is the feel of Gilbert Sorrentino's novel, the feel of the fifties, an aimless decade nurtured on nostalgia, a time which of late and for some hollow reason has itself become the focus of nostalgic maundering. This book, among its other contributions, should help to stanch that dismal backward flow of warmth. As Hannah Arendt has pointed out, horror, like its practitioners, is most often drab and gray and inward, not black and bold as the cliché demands. That is the tone and setting of the novel. The people are artistic: writers, painters, and the like. Artistic, not really arty, although maybe that's what they really are.

Sorrentino has given himself the Cervantine prerogative of doing what he damn well pleases with his characters, going back to where the novel got its start as a new form—old as it came to be soon thereafter. His purpose is creative, not destructive, even though his creation will destroy some myths and haze any number of real people who care to find themselves embodied here. He takes his text from William Carlos Williams, who hovers about, one chapter bearing the title "Brooklyn-Paterson Local."

> In the mind there is a continual play of obscure images which coming between the eyes and their prey seem pictures on the screen at the movies. Somewhere there appears to be a maladjustment. The wish would be to see not floating visions of unknown purport but the imaginative qualities of the actual things being perceived accompany their gross vision in a slow dance, interpreting as they go. But inasmuch as this will not always be the case one must dance nevertheless as he can.

Something like the shadows of Plato's cave as we cultivate our garden. For *Candide* is an apt tale for the age of the fifties. Sorrentino makes it even worse: "Tell me about the fifties. The shoulder patch of the 2nd Armored: HELL ON WHEELS."

This is a novel after and before, it is something that seems to have been read and digested and it is also work-in-progress, with the author protecting himself in advance the way the owner of a candy store does as he runs from behind the counter on the arrival of a group of urchins. This is his book, and all objections have been covered by his asides and the snorts he directs at ZuZu Jefferson, the editor of his creation. The experimental novel still goes on, but in rather a different way from what Zola had imagined. Sorrentino's approach is closer to certain Latin American experimentalists: Machado de Assis, who abhorred realism as a perversion of reality, and Julio Cortázar, who sketches out the way a novel might be written in Chapter 62 of *Hopscotch*, and proceeds to follow the advice of his man Morelli in his subsequent novel, *62: A Model Kit*. Morelli's description could easily be stretched to describe this novel by Gilbert Sorrentino:

> If I were to write this book, standard behavior (including the most unusual, its deluxe category) would be inexplicable by means of current instrumental psychology. The actors would appear to be unhealthy or complete idiots. . . . Everything would be a kind of disquiet, a continuous uprooting, a territory where psychological causality would yield disconcertedly, and those puppets would destroy each other or love each other or recognize each other without suspecting too much that life is trying to change its key in and through and by them. . . .

The forties begat the fifties which begat the sixties, and so on. It would seem that an uncomfortable period survives by looking back fondly on what had been just as bad, and looking forward oneirically to some utopia of progress. Something devastating has been happening in recent times with writers like Orwell and Burgess who have left us with only darkness at the end of the tunnel—more of the same, even worse. Sorrentino has done this to the past, tying its meanness to that of the present which it spawned. He reminds us that "This is a book about destruction. No tools to be found here with which to build the new society." But it is also a liberation: the emperor has no clothes on, never did, never will.

The characters are likely people deliberately made unlikely by the dark way in

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A Report TO OUR READERS

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which they are limned. An inordinate amount of time will be spent by readers who feel they know as they try to decipher out the real people. Sorrentino is a tricker. I get the feeling that this is just what he wants, simply to show that an author does indeed own his characters or tries to even though the reader is welcome to muck about with them by himself if he is a real reader (cf. Cortázar once more) despite the fact that the author can meld them into something else if he is a real author. Gilbert Sorrentino has kept a steady hand on this bucking book and neither reader nor character will take over. This is part of the book's cussedness, a refusal to submit to the age of take-over (what some lamebrain somewhere back called co-opting: the fifties and their spawn).

The people running through the book are early-spent poets, painters, and others a fair step above the artsy-craftsy. We start with Sheila Henry, "Lady the Brach," wife of Lou Henry, both bad poets on the Berkeley-elsewhere circuit. They are both friends of Dick Detective, another writer so named by Sorrentino as an affront to subtlety, and we see that the novel is also a kind of destruction of fake, skim-surface symbolism. There are others: Leo Kaufman, "Heed the story of the man who took the garbage out. And threw himself away"; Anton Harley, the cleaver-headed eater and former motorcycle man who devours with the drive of a gypsy moth larva; Bart Kahane, "Many Years a Painter," toadying in the art world, marrying Lolita (Yes, Nabokov's own Lolita. Sorrentino borrows when he needs to), and going blind. There is a great deal of sex in the novel and it is as dry and depressing as all the other kinds of seeking that these people are up to. It's score and score and gobble-gobble so that a quiet moment of meditative masturbation would be a healthy change from the essentially sexless urges of the people here.

The final scene is described as "Amethyst Neon," with Dick Detective and his wife April (in Paris?) finally having achieved their place in Vermont. All the now *manqués* foregather, and there goes the neighborhood. "They are in Vermont! Vermont! They are in the moonlight in Vermont!" And so the novel closes on a FitzPatrick Traveltalk note. In the novel's terms, that is the best that can be done, though, for as the author says elsewhere, "This is my America. Simply to stay sane is an achievement."

The richness of this book is hard to describe, just as "It is difficult to accept life as nothing more or less than the pattern it makes." Sorrentino gives the essence of what he is doing when he says, "This trait of the artist [the refusal ever to forget how things felt] is often confused with bitterness or cynicism, but it is simply an insistence upon remembering the specific emotional responses that were once actual." This is what separates him from his manikins and what they represent; this is what gives the book the woof (bow-wow, *kynos*) that fits its warp and ultimately prevents us from saying with Dr. Henry (*Frankenstein* I), "Oh, come away, Fritz, leave it alone!" as we look about at our monstrous lot. □

Letter from Paris

LEONARD DOWNIE, Jr.
Mr. Downie, an Alicia Patterson Fund Fellow on leave of absence from The Washington Post, *is the author of* Justice Denied: The Case for Reform of the Courts *(Praeger). He is completing, also for Praeger publication, a book on the housing problems of American cities.*

To generations of visitors from the constantly shifting and increasingly formless cities of the United States, a particular attraction of Paris has been its distinctive urban personality. The streets and gardens painted by the Impressionists, the garrets and cafés inhabited by the artists and writers of the twenties and thirties, the quais and bridges of the postcard pictures of the Seine, the harmonious stone façades of the graceful 19th-century buildings, and the landmark monuments, cathedrals and domes that stood out from the city's low skyline—all this could only have been Paris. And making up this familiar cohesive whole have always been remarkably individual neighborhoods, each with its own recognizable boulevards, residential streets, squares, parks, shops and cafés, which provided for their residents a more localized sense of place.

So it was startling to come to Paris this spring and be confronted with so many dramatic changes. The panoramic view of the city from the slope of Montmartre was filled with new 20- and 30-story high-rise office and apartment buildings towering above the old horizon of the city; the tallest, the 60-story Maine-Montparnasse Tower, still unfinished and surmounted by two giant insectlike construction cranes, stands two-thirds as high as the nearby Eiffel Tower. In two places, around the Gare de Lyon to the east and just beyond the Eiffel Tower to the west,

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CARNAGE

In spring we see them
The skeletons of deer
Bleached through winter

They stand out in fields
Unnatural to this season
Their bone fingers clutch

The edge of land
To hold one moment more
Before they slip

Beneath the waves of grass

William DeVoti

clusters of high-rises are going up right along the bank of the Seine itself. In other areas, big nondescript buildings make up large urban renewal projects carved out of the hearts of historic neighborhoods; bulky office buildings around the new Maine-Montparnasse Tower, for instance, replaced brownstones in the center of Montparnasse.

Elsewhere in the city, squares like the one in front of Notre Dame cathedral have been torn up for months by excavations for massive underground parking garages. A large section of the Tuileries Gardens has been cut off by construction fences for the building of a new central telephone exchange. Several of the picturesque glass-covered pavilions of Les Halles (once the central market, which was moved to the suburbs) have been torn down to make way for more new offices. An American-style automobile beltway that slices through the Bois de Boulogne and tunnels under one of its lakes is being completed on the city's perimeter. And final plans are being made for the construction of a wide freeway on the quais of the Left Bank of the Seine that would go through the Latin Quarter.

"This will be the last season before the destruction of the banks of the Seine, the site of Notre Dame and the 2,000-year-old heart of the city," darkly warned an advertisement placed in *Le Monde* by Les Bateaux Mouches, operator of sightseeing boats on the river. The ad called for help in defending the "universal heritage" of central Paris from encroachment by the freeway, more cars and massive new buildings. It was only one of several voices now raised in alarm.

A "Committee to Save Paris," formed by wealthy Parisians, has tried leaflets, meetings and petitions to save fashionable residential neighborhoods from the Left Bank freeway, the cutting down of majestic old trees for underground garage construction, and the replacement of stately old townhouses by modern office buildings marching ever outward from the Champs Elysées-Boulevard Haussmann business district. The Paris city council spent the greater part of its spring session debating whether the many urban renewal projects were ruining the scale of the city and providing too few public services and green spaces along with the new buildings. The Socialist Party charged that the government and the banks and developers involved in urban renewal had conspired to push the former working-class residents of these neighborhoods out of the city to make room for higher-income tenants of the new luxury apartments and offices. A group of architecture students warned that the sterile new developments were destroying forever the vital tissue of one traditional neighborhood after another.

In a Paris theatre, actors impersonating greedy real estate speculators manipulated models of 1900-style buildings and the boxy new skyscrapers in a kind of giant monopoly game to dramatize a playwright's contention that devious means were being used to buy up the old houses at low prices and replace them with high-profit high-rises. One reviewer went beyond appraisal of the play to warn emotionally that "unless something is done . . . Paris will be indistinguishable from Queens or Long Island." And a newspaper columnist, noting this and other signs of concern, conjured up a vision of the city in 2072 in which "what was once Paris will have become the roof of an immense underground garage, pierced by the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe and Notre Dame . . . [and supporting] a limited number of drugstores, pubs, pizza joints, supermarkets and apartment skyscrapers."

Several of the many planning officials now working for the governments of Paris and the surrounding region paint a quite different picture of the same scene. As they point out, Paris is undergoing its first thorough and much needed modernization since Baron Haussmann planned for the present boulevards, parks, stone buildings and underground utilities a century ago. The equivalent of hundreds of millions of dollars is being spent each year to enlarge, automate and redecorate the already extensive and efficient subway and commuter train systems, relieve congestion on roads leading into and out of Paris, move parked cars underground, lay new utility lines, build new incineration and sewage treatment plants, replace acres of rundown housing (much of which lacked central heat and private bathrooms) inside the city, and build five "new towns" of up to 500,000 people each outside Paris to help bring order to the rapid, chaotic growth of the suburbs. The strategy, conceived under

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de Gaulle and aided by a model reorganization of the Paris region's governments, makes sense and, in fact, seems to be exactly what a city like New York would need to stop the cancer now devouring its core. And was not, after all, the Paris that everyone has been so fond of for the past century the product of a similar sweeping overhaul by Haussmann under Napoleon III?

Haussmann, however, had tried to preserve the social advantages of medieval Paris even as he destroyed its narrow streets and firetrap buildings. Housing, shops, places of employment and nighttime activities were put all together in most parts of the city. Each stone building integrated artisans and shopkeepers on the ground floor with wealthy tenants of high-ceilinged first-story apartments, clerks and their families above them, and laborers and impoverished students and artists in the garrets on top. Walking down the streets of the neighborhoods like this that still survive in Paris today, one comes across a fascinating variety of people and activities, including the kind of broad range of commerce and culture that only such a neighborhood could support.

But the new areas of Paris, designed to achieve economic rather than social ends, are much different. The French Government, heavily burdened by the cost of public improvements, made sweeping concessions to private developers of new housing and offices. The central city's old 10-story height limit was forgotten, and the resulting high-rises not only have done violence to the old low line of the city, they have also crowded more people into smaller areas with fewer stores, public services and green spaces to be shared. Space-saving supermarkets (where housewives can stock up for their big new refrigerators, which were missing in the old housing) are replacing the individual neighborhood butcher, delicatessen, pastry, fish and produce shops. There is little or no open space for the open-air markets that thrive in and add color to the city's older areas.

Each new residential neighborhood is for one class only: upper-middle in the luxury apartment developments, much lower in the smaller, isolated government-subsidized projects. Given modern construction and financing methods, that is the easiest and most profitable way to build, and no one directed developers to do otherwise. For the same reason of maximum profit, too many residential buildings are being replaced with offices only, creating ever larger pockets of depressingly empty streets after business hours.

One must not go too far, however, in laying the blame on the avarice of businessmen or the complacency of government officials for these regrettable compromises in what has otherwise been a far-sighted effort to prepare Paris for the demands of the future. There was no public outcry when the plans for the urban renewal high-rises were first announced; no one bothered to take notice of what was happening until scores of new buildings had already thrust up into the sky. And it is clear from the brisk sales of new apartments (all sold or rented from blueprints, artists' sketches and salesmen's promises long before the buildings were completed) that better-off Parisians are eager to move into modern, well-equipped buildings with good views of what remain of the older, lower areas of the city. One young man, a middle-level salaried worker who considers himself a Socialist, was complaining strongly one week about what was happening to Paris; by the end of the next, he was holding open house in his spectacular new apartment at the top of the tower of an urban renewal project that had pushed working-class tenants out of a northeast Paris neighborhood. A survey by *Le Monde* showed that many suburbanites, too, were quite happy with their apartment complex swimming pools and evenings spent in front of television sets.

Paris is changing; there is no doubt about that. But, as difficult as it may be for the nostalgic to accept, and no matter what ill it may portend for the future, the fact is that Parisians are changing, too, and this strange new city growing up around them may be just what many if not most of them want. □

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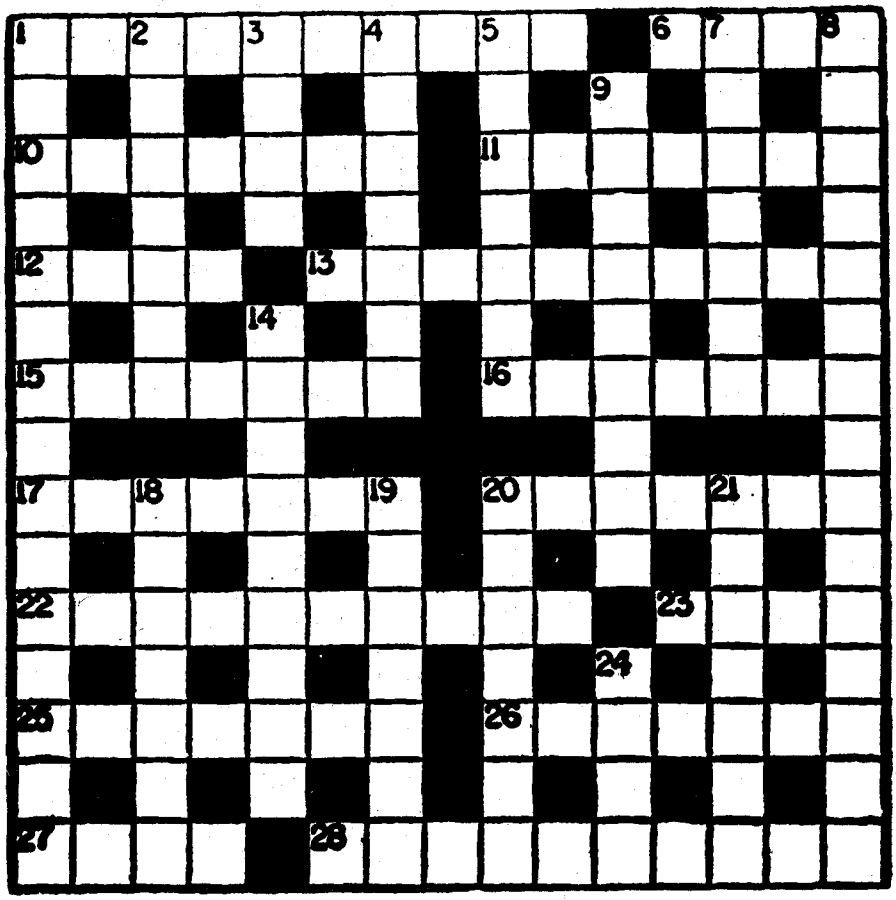

ACROSS

1 The opposite of a direct line can mistakenly end a cardinal point of agreement. (10)
6 Tom might be made to go with such a word, though possibly mis-cast. (4)
10 Thomas was a proverbial sort of 11. (7)
11 Possibly outbred, but still thrust forward. (7)
12 Many a Russian comes from here and from Skagway to find it. (4)
13 Instrument that leaves unfinished the statement as to where the performance will be. (10)
15 Not exactly this, nor briefly anything like it. (2, 5)
16 Probably a fast movement. (7)
17 Plays a line out, perhaps. (7)
20 What an official might hope to do after the charge. (7)
22 C might be on the first one added, though its particular spell suggests what might be a cash transaction. (6,4)
23 Not quite all there? Certainly not there! (4)
25 One might find ham and eggs just right, and appropriate. (2,5)
26 Made out of treacle for her especially! (7)
27 Hammered down, possibly. (4)
28 Stamp on it, already! (6,4)

DOWN

1 The things you might hear and see in school nowadays! (5-6,4)
2 History and Mathematics might be, as the river does. (7)
3 Part of the service sounds 25. (4)
4 This movie had several take-offs. (7)
5 Hobson only had one of them to offer. (7)
7 Where in France an old town type goes about as a messenger. (7)
8 Not a patriotic minstrel song, though you might look for it to find your bearings. (3,3,2,3,4)
9 Most of the shop carries some vague object like the Norwegian parliament. (9)
14 Is she deaf, or battered above the eyes? (9)
18 This bird should get the Communist vote! (7)
19 Orleans, reconstructed in Italy? (7)
20 See 24 down
21 Certainly a restful state. (7)
24 and 20 down Satisfied that it should be water? (4,7)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1451

ACROSS: 1 Subspecies; 6 Asps; 10 Reloads; 11 Penance; 12 Public-spirited; 14 Enraging; 15 Yemeni; 16 Sought; 18 Spot cash; 22 The Golden Bough; 24 Chromes; 25 Shebeen; 27 Hypnotists. DOWN: 1 Strip tease; 2 Belabor; 3 Playing the game; 4 Casts on; 5 Esprit; 7 Sincere; 8 Shed; 9 Indirect object; 13 Diphthongs; 17 Unhorse; 19 Press on; 20 Amulets; 21 Glassy; 23 and 26 across Scotties.

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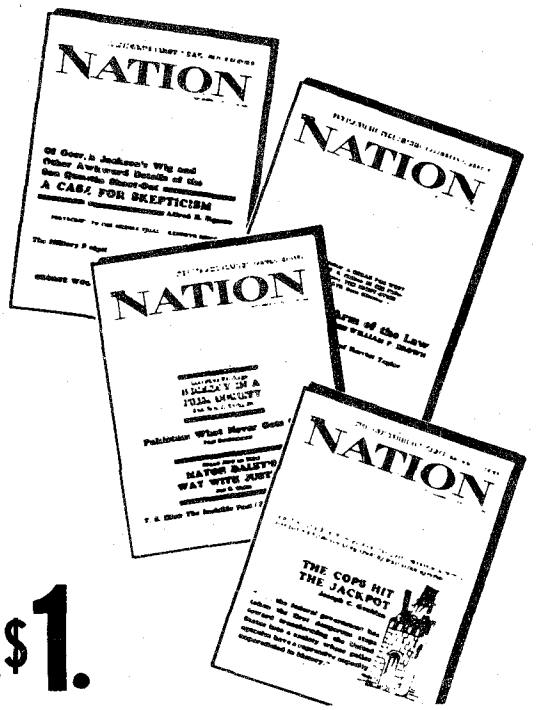

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